THE PLAINE-MANS PATH-VVAY TO HEAVEN.

Wherein every man may cleerly see whether he shall be saved or damned.

Set forth Dialogue-wise, for the better understanding of the simple.

By *Arth. Dent*, Preacher of the Word of God at South-Shoobery in Essex.

The five and twentieth Edition:

Corrected and amended: With a Table of all the principall matters, and three praiers, necessary to bee used in private families, hereunto added.

Zephanie 3. 5.

Every morning the Lord bringeth his judgement to light, hee faileth not: but the wicked will not learne to be ashamed.

LONDON,
Printed by *R. Young*, for *G. Latham*, in Paules Church-yard, at the signe of the Bishops-head. 1640.



OLIM

M. Mackay L.L.D.

DUNOON.

His Book was the means of converting the
celebrated John Bunyan,
&c &c his Life.

John

John

John

John

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John



To the Right Worshipfull Sir *Julius Cæsar*, Knight, one of the Masters of the Requeſt to the Kings Majeſtie, Judge of the high Court of Admiralty, and Maſter of Saint Katherins: *A.D.* wiſheth all good things in Chriſt Jeſus.

HAving finiſhed (Right Worſhipfull) and made ready for the Preſs this little Dialogue, I bethought mee (ſith the common maner of all that write any bookes in this age, is to dedicate the ſame to one or other of great place) to whom I might dedicate theſe my poore labours. At laſt, I did reſolve with my ſelfe, none to bee more fit then your Worſhip: both in regard of ſome affinitie in the fleſh, as alſo becauſe of thoſe manifold good parts wherewith the Almighty hath endued

you. Having therefore none other thing to preſent your Worſhip withall (in token of a thankefull heart for your courteſies ſhewed towards mee) behold, I doe here ſend unto you this third fruit of my labours publiſhed; moſt humbly beſeeching you to take it in good worth: not weighing the value of the thing (which is of no value) but the ſimple and good mind and meaning of the giver. This worke doth ſharply reprove and evict the world of ſin, & therefore is like to find many deadly enemies, which with cruell hatred will moſt eagerly purſue it unto death. Zoilus *alſo and his fellows, I know, will bitterly carpe at it: therefore it flieth unto your Worſhip for protection, and humbly deſireth to take ſanctuary under your wings. Wherefore I humbly intreat you to take upon you the patronage and defence of it, that by your meanes it may bee delivered both from the calumnious obloquies of evil diſpoſed perſons, and alſo*

alſo from the worlds malignity, ſo as it may take no injury. And concerning this little volume, the ſum of the matter of it you ſhall find in the Epiſtle to the Reader. As concerning the maner, here is no great matter of learning, wit, art, eloquence, or ingenious invention (for I have herein ſpecially reſpected the ignorant and vulgar ſort, whoſe edification I doe chiefly aime at:) yet ſomewhat there is which may concerne the learned, and give them ſome contentment. Whatſoever it be, I leave it with your Worſhip, beſeeching you to give it entertainment. And ſo I doe moſt humbly take my leave, commending both your ſelfe, your good wife, and your whole family, to the mercifull protection of the everliving God. From South-Shoobery *in* Eſſex, April 10. *An. Dom.* 1601.

Your Worſhips to command in the Lord,

ARTHUR DENT.

The Epistle to the Reader.

GEntle Reader, seeing my little Sermon of Repentance, some few yeeres since published, hath beene so well accepted of, I have for thy further good published this Dialogue, being the third fruit of my labour: wishing to it the like successe, that God thereby may have the glory, and thou, who art the Reader, comfort. I have in one part of this Dialogue produced some of the ancient Writers, and some of the wise Heathen also, to testifie upon their oath in their owne language, and to bear witnesse of the ouglinesse of some vices, which we in this age make light of: which I wish may not be offensive to any. In other parts of this worke I do in a manner relinquish them. But in this case I have in my weake iudgement thought them to be of some good use,

uſe, to ſhew forth thus much, That if wee doe not in time repent, forſake our ſinnes, and ſeeke after God, both the ancient Chriſtian Fathers (whoſe eyes ſaw not that we ſee, nor their eares heard what we heare) yea the very Heathen alſo ſhal riſe up in judgement againſt us. Let none therefore ſtumble at it. But if any man doe, let him remember I am in a Dialogue, not in a Sermon. I write to all of all ſorts; I ſpeak not of ſome few of one ſort. But that which is done herein, is not much more then that of the Apoſtle, (*As ſome of your owne Poets have ſaid, Act.* 17.) which is warrantable. One thing deare Chriſtian, I pray thee let me beg of thee; to wit, that thou wouldſt not reade two or three leaves of this booke, and ſo caſt it from thee; but that thou wouldſt reade it throughout, even to the end. For I doe aſſure thee, if there be any thing in it worth the reading, it is beſtowed in the latter part thereof, and

moſt of all towards the concluſion. Be not diſcouraged therefore at the harſhneſſe of the beginning: but looke for ſmoother matter in the midſt, and moſt ſmooth in the percloſe and wind-up of all. For this Dialogue hath in it, not the nature of a Tragedy, which is begun with joy, and ended with ſorrow: but a Comedy, which is begun with ſorrow, & ended with joy. This booke meddleth not at all with any controverſies in the Church, or any thing in the ſtate Eccleſiaſticall, but onely entreth into a controverſie with Sathan and ſin. It is contrived into ſixe principall heads: Firſt, it ſheweth mans miſery in nature, with the means of recovery. Secondly, it ſharply inveigheth againſt the iniquity of the time, and common corruptions of the world. Thirdly, it ſheweth the markes of the children of God, and of the reprobates; together with the apparent ſignes of Salvation and Damnation. Fourthly, it declareth how

how hard a thing it is to enter into life, and how few ſhall enter. Fiftly, it layeth open the ignorance of the world, with the objections of the ſame. Laſt of all, it publiſheth and proclaimeth the ſweet promiſes of the Gospel, with the abundant mercies of God to all that repent, beleeve, and truly turne unto him. The Author of all bleſſing give a bleſſing unto it. The God of peace, which brought againe from the dead our Lord Jeſus, the great Shepheard of the ſheep, through the bloud of the everlaſting Covenant, make us perfect in all good works, ſanctifie us thorowout, amend all our imperfections, and keep us blameleſſe untill the day of his moſt glorious appearing, Amen.

Thine in the Lord,

A.D.

The Contents of this Dialogue.

First, it sheweth mans misery by nature, with the meanes of recovery.

Secondly, it sharply inveigheth against the iniquity of the time, and common corruptions of the world.

Thirdly, it sheweth the marks of the children of God, and of the reprobate; with the apparent signes of Salvation and Damnation.

Fourthly, it declareth how hard a thing it is to enter into life, and how few shall enter.

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Last of all, it publisheth and proclaimeth the sweet promises of the Gospel, with the abundant mercies of God to all that repent, beleeve, and truly turne unto him.

THE

THE PLAINE-MANS PATHWAY TO HEAVEN.

Interlocutors. { *Theologus*, a Divine. *Philagathus*, an Honest man. *Asunetus*, an Ignorant man. *Antilegon*, a Caviller.

Philigathus.

WEll met good Master *Theologus*.

Theol. What? mine old friend Philagathus! I am glad to see you in good health.

Phil. Are you walking, Sir, here all alone in this pleasant meadow?

Theol. Yea, for I take some pleasure at this time of the yeer to walk abroad in the fields for my recreation, both to take the fresh aire, and to heare the sweet singing of birds.

Phil. Indeed, Sir, it is very comfotable, especially now in this pleasant moneth

moneth of May; and thankes bee to God, hitherto we have had a very forward Spring, and as kindly a ſeaſon as came this ſeven yeere.

Theol. God doth abound towards us in mercies; Oh that we could abound towards him in thankſgiving.

Phil. I pray you, Sir, what a clock hold you it?

Theol. I take it to be a little paſt one, for I came but even now from dinner.

Phil. But behold, yonder come two men towards us; what be they, I pray you?

Theol. They be a couple of neighbours of the next Pariſh; the one of them is called Aſunetus, who in very deed is a very ignorant man in Gods matters; and the other is called Antilegon, a notable Atheiſt and caviller againſt all goodneſſe.

Phil. If they be ſuch, it were good for us to take ſome occaſion to ſpeake of matters of religion: it may be we ſhall doe them ſome good.

Theol. You have made a good motion: I like it well. If therefore you will minister ſome matter, and move ſome queſtions, I will be ready to anſwer in the beſt ſort I can.

Phil. But ſtay, Sir, lo here they come uponus.

Theol.

Theol. **Welcome good neighbours, welcome. How doe you Aſunctus? and you Antilegon?**

Aſun. Well, God be thanked: and wee are glad to ſee your Maſterſhip in good health.

Theol. **What make both of you here at this time of the day? There is ſome occaſion, I am ſure, draweth you this way.**

Aſun. Indeed, Sir, we have ſome little buſineſſe; for wee came to talke with one of your Pariſh about a Cow wee ſhould buy of him.

Theol. **Hath my neighbour a Cow to ſell?**

Antil. Wee are told hee hath a very good one to ſell; but I am affraid at this time of the yeere we ſhall find deare ware of her.

Theol. **How dear? what doe you thinke a very good Cow may bee worth?**

Antil. A good Cow, indeed, at this time of the yeere, is worth very neere foure pound, which is a great price.

Theol. **It is a very great price indeed.**

Phil. I pray you, M. *Theologus*, leave off this talking of Kine and worldly matters, and let us enter into ſome ſpeech of matters of religion, whereby we may doe good, and take good one of another.

Theol.

Theol. You say well. But it may be these mens businesse requireth haste, so as they cannot stay.

Asun. No, Sir, wee are in no great haste, we can stay two or three houres; for the daies are long: if wee dispatch our businesse by night, it will serve our turne well enough.

Theol. Then if it will please you to walke to yonder Oake tree, there is a goodly arbour, and handsome seates, where wee may all sit in the shadow, & confer of heavenly matters.

Asun. With a good will, Sir.

Phil. Come then, let us goe.

Asun. This is a goodly arbour indeed, and here be handsome seats.

Theol. Sit you all downe, I pray you. Now friend Philagathus, if you have any questions to move of matters of religion, we are all ready to heare you.

Phil. It may be these men are somewhat ignorant of the very principles of religion; and therefore I think it not amisse to begin there, and so to make way for further matters.

Theol. I pray you doe so then.

Phil. First then I demand of you, in what state all men are born by nature.

Theol. In the state of condemnation; as appeareth, Ephes. 2.3. We are by nature the children of wrath, as well as others. And again, it is written:

ten: Behold, I was borne in iniquity, and in ſin hath my mother conceived mee, Pſal. 51.5.

Phil. Is it every mans caſe? Are not Dukes and Nobles, Lords and Ladies, and the great Potentates of the earth exempted from it?

Theol. **No ſurely: it is the common caſe of all, both high and low, rich and poore; as it is written:** What is man, that hee ſhould be cleane; and he that is borne of a woman, that he ſhould be juſt?

Phil. From whence commeth it, that all men are borne in ſo woefull a caſe?

Theol. **From the fall of Adam, who thereby hath not only wrapt himſelf, but all his poſterity in extreme and unſpeakable miſery, as the Apoſtle ſaith:** By one mans diſobedience many were made ſinners. **And,** By the offence of one, the fault came on all men to condemnation, Rom. 5.1.

Phil. What reaſon is there that wee all ſhould thus be puniſhed for another mans offence?

Theol. **Becauſe we were then all in him, and are now all of him: that is, we are ſo deſcended out of his loins, that of him we have not onely received our naturall and corrupt bodies, but alſo by propagation have inherited his foule corruptions, as it were by hereditary right.**

Phil.

Phil. But for as much as ſome have dreamed that *Adam* by his fall hurt himſelfe onely, and not his poſterity; and that wee have his corruption derived unto us by imitation, and not by propagation: therefore I pray you ſhew this more plainly.

Theol. Even as great perſonages by committing of treaſon, doe not only hurt themſelves, but alſo ſtaine their blood, and diſgrace their poſterity (for the children of ſuch Nobles are diſ-inherited, whoſe blood is attainted, till they be reſtored again by Act of Parliament:) Even ſo our blood being attainted by Adams tranſgreſſion, we can inherit nothing of right till we be reſtored by Chriſt.

Phil. Doth this hereditary infection and contagion over-ſpread our whole nature?

Theol. Yes truly, it is univerſall, extending it ſelfe throughout the whole man, both ſoule and body, both reaſon, underſtanding, will, and affections: for the Scriptures avouch, that wee are dead in ſinnes and treſpaſſes.

Epheſ. 2. 1. Col. 1. 2. & 2. 3.

Phil. How underſtand you that?

Theol. Not of the deadneſſe of the body, or the naturall faculties of the ſoule, but of the ſpirituall faculties.

Phil. Did *Adam* then loſe his nature, and deſtroy it by his fall? or is our nature

nature taken away by his fall?

Theol. **Not so: our nature was corrupted thereby, but not destroted: for still there remaineth in our nature, reason, understanding, will, and affections, and we are not as a blocke or a stocke; but by Adams disobedience we are blemished, maimed, and spoiled of all ability to understand aright, or to will and doe aright: as it is written;** Wee are not sufficient of our selves to think any thing as of our selves: but our sufficiency is of God. **And again:** It is God which worketh in you both the will and the deed, even of his good pleasure. **And as concerning the other point, St. James** saith, That all men are made after the similitude of God: **meaning thereby, that there remain some reliques and parts of Gods image even in the most wicked men: as reason, understanding, &c. so that our nature was not wholly destroyed.**

2 Cor. 3. 5.

Phil. 2. 3.

James 3. 9.

Phil. Then you thinke there be some sparkes and remnants left in us still of that excellent image of God, which was in our first creation.

Theol. **I thinke so indeed: and it may plainly appeare unto us in the wise speeches and writings of Heathen Poets and Philosophers: in all which we may, as by certaine rutnes, perceive what was the excellent**

lent frame and building of mans creation.

Phil. Can a man please God in any thing which hee doth, so long as hee continueth in the state of nature?

Theol. No, not in any thing: for till wee be in the state of grace, even our best actions are sinfull, as preaching, prayer, almes-deeds, &c. as it is written: Who can bring a clean thing out of that which is unclean? *Job* 14.4. The Apostle also saith: They that are in the flesh cannot please God, Rom. 8.8. that is, such as are still in their naturall corruption. And our Lord Jesus himselfe saith: Doe men gather grapes of thornes, or figs of thistles? Matth. 7.16. meaning thereby, that meere naturall men can bring forth no fruits acceptable to God.

Phil. This is a very harsh and hard saying: I pray you, for my further instruction, make it more plaine.

Theol. Men in the state of nature may doe those things which of themselves are good, but they doe utterly faile in the manner of doing them; they doe them not as they should be done: that is, in faith, love, zeale, conscience of obedience, &c. neither yet with any cheerfulnesse, delight, or feeling, but even as it were forcing themselves to doe the outward actions. Thus did Cain sacrifice, the

Pharisees

Pharisees pray, Ananias and Sapphira give almes, and the Jewes offer up their oblations and burnt offrings.

Phil. Have men any true sight, or lively and found feeling of this misery and wofull estate, so long as they bee meerly naturall?

Theol. No surely, but are altogether blinded and hardened in it, being nothing desirous to come out of it, but doe greatly please themselves in it, and can hardly bee perswaded that they are in any such wofull case: as appeareth plainly in the example of that Ruler, who being commanded, or rather required of our Saviour Christ to keepe the commandements, answered: All these have I kept from my youth, Luk. 18. 21. And againe, although the Church of Laodicea was wretched, miserable, poore, blind, and naked; yet shee thought her selfe rich, increased with goods, and wanting nothing. It followeth then, that so long as men are in the state of nature, they have no true sight and feeling of their miseries.

Phil. Doyou not thinke that all men, being meerly naturall, are under the curse of the Law?

Theol. Yes certainly: and not onely so, but also under the very tyrannie and dominion of Sathan, though they know it not, see it not, feele it not

not, or perceiue it not: for all that are not in Christ, are under the curse of the Law, and the power of darknesse and the Diuell: as appeareth, Eph. 2.2. where the Diuell is called the Prince that ruleth in the aire, euen the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. In another place hee is called the god of this world, who blindeth the eyes of all vnbeleeuers. And againe, it is said, that all men naturally are in his snare, being taken captiue of him at his will.

2 Cor. 4.4.

2. Tim. 2.26

Phil. Few will be perswaded of that; they will say, they defie the diuell, and thanke God they were never troubled with him.

Theol. Their hot words doe nothing amend the matter: for the diuell is no more driuen away with words, then with holy water: but he reigneth in the tongues and mouthes, nay, possesseth the very hearts and intrails of thousands which say they defie him, and are not troubled with him: as appeareth manifestly by their particular actions, and the whole course of their life.

Phil. Me thinkes, if the diuell doe so inwardly possesse the hearts and consciences of men, they should have some sight and feeling of it.

Theol. The working of the diuell in

in mens soules (being an invisible spirit) is with such unconceivable sleight and crafty conveyance, that men in the state of nature cannot possibly feele it or perceive it: for how can a blind man see, or a dead man feele?

Phil. Shew this more plainly.

Theol. Even as a crafty Juggler doth so prestigiate and blind mens outward senses by the delusions of Sathan, that they thinke they see that which they see not, and feele that which they feele not: even so the divell doth so delude and bewitch our inward senses, and the naturall faculties of our soules, that wee, having a myst cast before our eyes, think wee are that which we are not, see that which we see not, and feele that which wee feele not. For the deep cunning of Satan lieth in this, that hee can give us our deathe wound, and wee shall never know who hurt us.

Phil. Few will beleeve this to bee true.

Theol. True indeed: for few will beleeve the Scriptures: few will beleeve this because few feele it. Where it is not felt, it can hardly be beleeved. Only the Elect doe feele it, and therefore only the Elect doe beleeve it. As for all others, they are the very

prentizes

prentizes and bond-slaves of the divell, which is a thousand times worse than to be a galley-slave.

Phil. How long doe men continue in this wofull state of nature, being under the curse of the Law, and the very slavery of Satan and sin?

Theol. **Till they be regenerate and borne againe, and so brought into the state of grace; as our Lord Jesus saith:** Except a man be borne again, he cannot see the Kingdome of God. John 3.3.

Phil. Doe not many die, and depart this life, before they be borne againe, and consequently, before they bee brought into the state of grace?

Theol. **Yes, no doubt, thousands: for many live forty or threescore yeeres in this world, and in the end dye, and goe out of this life, before they know wherefore they came into it, as it is written:** My people perish for want of knowledge. Hos. 4.6.

Phil. What may we thinke of such?

Theol. **I quake to speake what I think: for surely I doe not see how such can be saved. I speake not now of infants and children, whereof some no doubt are saved by vertue of the promise and covenant, through the election of grace.**

Phil. It seemeth then that you think none can bee saved, but those onely which are borne againe.

Theol.

Theol. I think ſo indeed.

Phil. I pray you tell mee what the ſame regeneration and new birth is, whereof you ſpeake.

Theol. It is a renuing and repairing of the corrupted and decayed eſtate of our ſoules: as it is written; Be yee changed by the renuing of your mind, Rom. 12. And again: Be renued in the ſpirit of your mind, Eph. 4. 23.

Phil. Explaine this more fully.

Theol. Even as the wild olive retaineth his old nature, till it be grafted into the ſweet olive, but afterward is partaker of a new nature; ſo we, till we be grafted into Chriſt, retaine our old nature, but afterward are turned into a new creature: as it is written, If any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature, 2 Cor. 5. 17.

Phil. I underſtand not what you ſay.

Theol. You muſt know this, that as there is a naturall birth of the whole man; ſo there is alſo a ſpirituall birth of the whole man.

Phil. How is that?

Theol. When as the naturall faculties of the ſoule; as reaſon, underſtanding, will and affections, and the members of the body alſo are ſo ſanctified, purged, and rectified by grace, that we underſtand, will, and deſire that which is good.

Phil. Cannot a man will and deſire that

that which is good before he be borne againe?

Theol. No more then a dead man can desire the good things of this life. For mans will is not free to consent unto good, till it be enlarged by grace: and an unregenerate man doth sinne necessarily, though not by constraint. For mans will is free from constraint (for it sinneth of it selfe) but not from thraldome unto sinne.

Phil. You speake, as if a man could do no other thing but sinne, till the new worke be wrought in him.

Theol. That is mine opinion indeed. For a man and his flesh are all one, till he bee regenerate: they agree together like man and wife, they joyne together in all evill, they live and dye together: for when the flesh perisheth, the man perisheth.

Phil. Is not this regeneration a changing, or rather destroying of humane nature?

Theol. Nothing lesse: it is neither an abolishing, nor changing of the substance of body or soule, or any of the faculties thereof, but onely a rectifying and repairing of them by removing the corruption.

Phil. Is then our naturall corruption so purged and quite removed by the power of grace, as that it remaineth not at all in us, but that we

wee are wholly freed of it?

Theol. **Not so: For the reliques & remnants of our old nature, which the Scripture calleth the old man, doe hang about vs and dwell in us, even until our dying day; as it is plainly proved in the ten last Verses of the seventh to the** Romans.

Phil. Then you affirme, that this new man, or new work of grace and regeneration, is unperfect in this life.

Theol. **Yea: for the new creature, or new worke of grace, can never be fully fashioned in this life, but is alwaies in fashioning. And as our faith & knowledge in this life are unperfect; so is our regeneration and sanctification.**

Phil. You said before that the regeneration or new birth is of the whole man: which speech seemeth to imply, that the new work of grace is entire and perfect.

Theol. **You mistake the matter. For although the new birth is universall, and of the whole man, yet it is not entire, perfect, pure, & without mixture or corruption. For it is written:** The flesh lusteth against the spirit, & the spirit against the flesh. **The Apostle also prayeth, that the Thessalonians may be sanctified throughout, in spirit, soule, and body.**

Phil. This seemeth very obscure, I pray you make it more plaine.

Theol. **You must note this, that the**

new worke and the old, flesh and spirit, grace and corruption, are so intermingledly ioyned together, in all the faculties of the soule and body, as that the one doth ever fight against the other.

Phil. But tell me, I pray you, how you understand this intermingling of grace and corruption in the soule. Doe you meane, that grace is placed in one part of the soule, and corruption in another, so as they be sundred in place?

Theol. No, that is not my meaning: but this, that they be joyned & mingled together (as I said) in & throughout the whole man. For the mind or understanding part is not one part flesh, and another part spirit; but the whole mind is flesh, & the whole mind is spirit, partly one, and partly another. The same is to be said of will & affections.

Ph. I pray you expresse it more plainly.

Theol. Even as the aire in the dawning of the day, is not wholly light, or wholly darke, as at midnight, or at noon-day; neither is it in one part light, & in another part darke: but the whole aire is partly light, and partly darke throwout: and as in a vessell of luke-warm water, the water it selfe is not only hot, nor only cold, but heat & cold are mixed together in every part of the water; so is the flesh and the spirit mingled together in the soule of man,

man. And this is the cause why these two contrary qualities fight together.

Phil. Out of doubt this doctrine of regeneration is a very great mysterie.

Theol. **Yes certainly, it is a secret of secrets, which the wise of this world cannot comprehend.**

Phil. Some think that courtesie, kindnesse, good nurture, good nature, and good education, are regeneration; and that courteous and good natured men must needs be saved.

Theol. **They are generally deceived: for these things doe not necessarily accompany salvation, but are to be found in such as are altogether prophane and irreligious: yet wee are to love such good outward qualities, and the men in whom we finde them.**

Phil. What say you then to learning, wit, and policie? are not these things of the essence of religion, & prove a regeneration?

Theol. **No, no: for they be externall gifts, which may be in the most wicked men; as in Papists, Heathen Poets & Philosophers: yet we are greatly to reverence learned and wise men, although the new and inward worke be not as yet wrought: for that is onely of God, that is from above.**

Phil. The common people doe attribute much to learning and policie: for they will say, Such a man is learned and

wise, and knoweth the Scripture as well as any of them, and yet hee doth not thus and thus.

Theol. **It is one thing to know the history & letter of the Scriptures, and another thing to beleeve and feele the power therof in the heart, which is only from the sanctifying spirit, which none of the wise of this world can have.**

Phil. It is a common opinion, that if a man hold the truth in judgement, be no Papist or Hereticke, but leadeth an honest civill life, then he must of necessity be saved.

Theol. **That followeth not; for many come so farre, which yet notwithstanding have not the inward touch.**

Phil. That seemeth strange. For many will say, As long as they bee neither Whore nor Thiefe, nor spotted with such like grosse sinnes, they trust in God they shall be saved.

Theol. **They erre, not knowing the Scriptures. For many thousands are in great danger of losing their soules for ever, which are free from such notorious and horrible vices: nay many which in the world are counted good honest men, good true dealers, good neighbours, and good townes-men.**

Asun. I pray you, Sir, give me leave a little. I have heard all your speech hitherto, and I like reasonable well of it; but now I can forbeare no longer; my conscience

conſcience urgeth me to ſpeak: For me thinks you goe too far, you goe beyond your learning in this, that you condemn good neighbours and good townſ-men. You ſay, many ſuch men are in dãger of loſing their ſoules; but I will never beleeve it while I live: For if ſuch men be not ſaved, I cannot tell who ſhall.

Theol. **But you muſt learn to know out of the Scriptures, that all outward honeſty & righteouſnes, without the true knowledge & inward feeling of God, availeth not to eternall life: As our Sabiour Chriſt ſaith,** Except your righteouſnes exceed the righteouſnes of the Scribes & Phariſes, ye cannot enter into the Kingdome of heaven. Matth. 12. **It is alſo written, that when** Paul **preached at Berea many honeſt men & women did beleeve: that is, ſuch as were outwardly honeſt, or honeſt to the world only; for they could not be truly & inwardly honeſt before they did beleeve. Therefore you ſee that this outward honeſty & civility, without the inward regeneration of the ſpirit, availeth not to eternall life: and then conſequently, all your honeſt worldly men are in great danger of loſing their ſoules for ever.** Act. 17. 12.

Aſun. What ſound reaſon can you yeeld, why ſuch honeſt men ſhould be condemned?

Theol. **Becauſe many ſuch are ut-**

terly void of all true knowledge of God & his word. May, which is more, many of them despise the word of God, and hate all the zealous professors of it. They esteeme Preachers but as prattlers, and Sermons as good tales: they esteem a Preacher no more than a Shoomaker: they regard the Scriptures no more than their old shooes. what hope is there then, I pray you, that such men should be saved? Doth not the holy Ghost say, How shall wee escape, if we neglect so great salvation? Heb. 2. 5.

Asun. You goe too farre; you judge too hardly of them.

Theol. Not a whit. For all experience sheweth, that they mind, dreame, & dote of nothing else day and night, but this world this world, lands & leases, grounds & livings, kine and sheep, and how to waxe rich. All their thoughts, words, & workes, are of these and such like things. And their actions do most manifestly declare, that they are of the earth, & speake of the earth, & there is nothing in them but earth, earth. As for Sermons, they care not how few they heare. And for the scriptures, they regard them not, they reade them not, they esteem them not worth the while, there is nothing more irkesome unto them: they had rather pill strawes, or do any thing, than heare, reade, or conferre of the Scriptures. And as the

Prophet

Prophet saith: The word of the Lord is as a reproach unto them, they have no delight in it. Jer. 8. 10.

Phil. I marvell much that such men should live so honestly to the world-ward.

Theol. **No marvell at all: for many bad men, whose hearts are wormeeaten within, yet for some outward and carnall respects doe abstaine from the grosse act of sinne: as some for credit, some for shame, some for feare of law, some for feare of punishment; but none for love of God, for zeale of conscience, or of obedience. For it is a sure thing, that the wicked may have that spirit which doth repelle, but not that which doth renew.**

Phil. It seemeth then by your speeches, that some wch are not regenerate do in some things excell the children of God.

Theol. **Most certain it is, that some of them in outward gifts, and the outward carriage of themselves, doe goe beyond some of the Elect.**

Phil. Shew me, I pray you, in what gifts.

Theol. **In learning, discretion, justice, temperance, prudence, patience, liberality, affability, kindnesse, courtesie, good nature, &c.**

Phil. Me thinkes it should not be possible.

Theol. **Yes truly: for some of Gods deare children, in whom no doubt the**

inward worke is truly and soundly wrought, yet are so troubled & incombred with a crabbed and crooked nature, & so clogged with some master-sin, as some with anger, some with pride, some with covetousnesse, some with lusts, some one way, & some another; all which breaking out in them, doe so blemish them & their profession, that they cannot so shine forth unto men as otherwise no doubt they would; and this is their wound, their griefe, and their heart-smart, and that which costeth them many a teare, and many a prayer: and yet can they not get the full victory over them, but still they are left in them, as a pricke in the flesh to humble them.

Ph. Yet love should cover a multitude of such infirmities in Gods children.

Theol. It should doe so indeed: but there is great want of love, even in the best: and the worst sort espying these infirmities in the godly, runne upon them with open mouth, and take upon them to condemne them utterly, and to judge their hearts, saying, They bee hypocrites, dissemblers, and there is none worse than they.

Phil. But do you not think, that there be some counterfeits even amongst the greatest professors?

Theol. Yes, no doubt there be, and alwaies habe bin some very hypocrites in

in the Church; but we must take heed of judging & condemning all for some. For it were very much to condemne Christ & his eleven Disciples because of one Judas; or the whole Primitive Church for one Ananias and Sapphira.

Phil. But I hope you are of this mind, that some regenerate men even in outward gifts, and their outward carriage, are comparable with many others.

Theol. **Questionlesse very many. For they being guided by Gods spirit, and upheld by his grace, do walke very uprightly & unblameably towards men.**

Phil. Yet there resteth one scruple: for it seemeth very strange unto me, that men of so discreet carriage as you speak of, and of so many good parts, should not be saved. It is great pity such men should be damned.

Theol. **It seemeth so unto us indeed, but God is onely wise. And you must note, that as there be some infirmities in Gods children, which hee correcteth with temporall chastisements, and yet rewardeth their faith, love, and inward service and obedience with eternal life; so there be some good things in the wicked, and them that are without Christ, which God rewardeth with temporall blessings, and yet punisheth them eternally for their unbeliefe and hardnesse of heart.**

Phil. Now you have reasonably well

satisfied mee touching the doctrine of regeneration, and the manifold errours and deceits that are in it, & of it. I pray you let us now proceed: and first of all tell me by what meanes the new birth is wrought.

Theol. **By the preaching of the word, as the outward meanes: and the secret worke of the spirit, as the inward meanes.**

1 Pet. 1.2, 3. John 15.3. Act. 10.44. Ephes. 5.3.

Phil. Many heare the word preached, and are nothing the better, but rather the worse: what, I pray you, is the cause of that?

Theol. **Mens owne incredulity, and hardnesse of heart: because God in his wrath leaveth them to themselves, and depriveth them of his spirit, without the which all preaching is in vaine. For except the spirit doe follow the word into our hearts, we can finde no joy, taste, nor comfort therein.**

Act. 16.14.

Phil. Cannot a man attain unto regeneration and the new birth, without the word and the spirit?

Theol. **No verily. For they are the instruments and meanes whereby God doth worke it.**

Anti. Why may not a man have as good a faith to God-ward that heareth no Sermons, as he that heareth all the Sermons in the world?

Theol. **Why may not he which eateth no meat, be as fat and as well liking as**

as hee that eateth all the meat in the world: For is not the preaching of the word the food of our soules?

Antil. I like not so much hearing of Sermons, & reading of the Scriptures, except men could keepe them better.

Theol. **Faithfull & honest hearers do therefore heare, that they may be more able to observe and doe. For a man cannot doe the will of God before hee know it, and he cannot know it without hearing and reading.**

Antil. I marvell what good men doe get by gadding to Sermons, and poring so much in the Scripture, or what are they better than others? There are none more full of envie & malice than they: They will do their neighbour a shrewd turne as soon as any body; and therefore in mine opinion, they be but a company of hypocrites and precise fooles.

Theol. **You judge uncharitably. Full little doe you know what they feele, or what good Gods people get by hearing of the word. For the worke of the spirit in the hearts of the Elect is very secret, & altogether hid from the world, as it is written:** The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou heares the sound therof, but canst not tell whither it goeth, or whence it commeth; so is every man that is born of the spirit. **And againe:** The things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God. John 3. 8.

Antil.

Antil. Tush, tush, what needs all this adoe? If a man say his Lords Praier, his ten Commandements, and his Belief, & keep them, and say no body harme, nor doe no body harme, and doe as he would be done to, have a good faith to God-ward, and be a man of Gods beliefe, no doubt he shall be saved without all this running to Sermons, and prattling of the Scripture.

Theol. **Now you powze it out indeed: you thinke you have spoken wisely. But alas! you have bewraied your great ignorance. For you imagine a man may be saved without the word, which is a grosse errour.**

Antil. It is no matter: say you what you will, and all the Preachers in the world besides; as long as I serve God, and say my praiers duly and truly, morning and evening, & have a good faith in God, and put my whole trust in him, and do my true intent, and have a good mind to God-ward, and a good meaning, although I am not learned, yet I hope it wil serve the turn for my soules health. For that God which made mee must save me. It is not you that can save me, for all your learning, and all your Scriptures.

Theol. **You may very fitly be compared to a sicke man, who having his braine distempered with heat raveth, & speaketh idly, he cannot tell what. For the**

the holy Ghoſt ſaith, Hee that turneth away his eare from hearing the Law, even his praier ſhal be abominable. **And again,** He that deſpiſeth the Word ſhall be deſtroied. **So long therefore as you deſpiſe Gods Word, & turn away your eare from hearing his Goſpel preached, all your praiers, your fantaſticall ſerving of God, your good meanings, and your good intents, are to no purpoſe; but moſt odious and loathſome in the ſight of God, as it is written:** My ſoule hateth your new moons, and your appointed feaſts, they are a burthen unto me, I am weary to beare them: When you ſtretch out your hands I will hide mine eyes from you; and though you make many praiers, I will not hear: For your hands are ful of bloud. **And again the Lord ſaith by the ſame Prophet:** He that killeth a bullock, is as if he ſlew a man: he that ſacrificeth a ſheep, as if he cut off a dogs necke: he that offereth an oblation, as if he offred ſwines bloud: hee that remembreth incenſe, as if hee bleſſed an idoll. **Where you ſee the Lord telleth you his minde touching theſe matters: to wit, that all your praiers, ſervices, good meanings, &c. are abominable unto him, ſo long as you walk in ignorance, prophaneneſſe, diſobedience, & contempt of the Goſpel. For hee ſaith in the words immediately going before:** To him will I looke, even to him that

Prov. 18. 9.

Prov. 13. 15.

Eſa. 1. 14.

Eſa. 66. 3.

that is poore, and of a contrite ſpirit, and trembleth at my words.

Aſun. I grant indeed, for them that are idle, & have little to do, it is not amiſſe now and then to heare a Sermon, and read the Scriptures: but we have no leiſure, we muſt follow our buſineſſe, we cannot live by the Scriptures; they are not for plain folk, they are too high for us, we will not meddle with them. They belong to Preachers and Miniſters.

John 10. Theol. **Chriſt ſaith:** My ſheep heare my voice, and I give unto them eternall life. **If therefore you refuſe to heare the voice of Chriſt, you are none of his ſheep, neither can you have eternall life. And in another place our Lord** John 8. 47. **Jeſus ſaith:** He that is of God, heareth Gods word. Ye therfore heare it not, becauſe yee are not of God. **Saint** Paul **writing to all ſorts of men, both rich and poore, high and low, men & women,** Coloſ. 3. 16. **young and old, exhorteth,** that the word of Chriſt may dwell plenteouſly in the all, in all wiſdome. **You ſee therefore that the Apoſtle would have all ſorts of people that have ſoules to ſave, to be well acquainted with the Scriptures. Therefore you may as well ſay, you will not meddle with God, with Chriſt, nor with everlaſting life, as to ſay, you will not meddle with the Scriptures.**

Aſun. Well, I cannot reade, and therefore

fore I cannot tell what Chriſt, or what S. Paul may ſay; but this I am ſure of, that God is a good man (worſhipped might he be) he is mercifull, and that we muſt be ſaved by our good praiers and good ſerving of God.

Theol. **You ſpeake foolishly and ignorantly in all that you ſay, having no ground for any thing you ſpeake, but your owne fancy, and your owne conceit: & yet you will beleeve your owne fancy against all Preachers, & against all that can be ſpoken out of the word. But I pray you give me leave a little: If a man dreame that hee ſhall be a King, and in the morning when hee is awake, perſwadeth himſelfe it ſhall be ſo, may he not be juſtly laughed at, as having no ground for it? Euen ſo may all they, which beleeve their owne dreames and fantaſies touching ſalvation. But it is true which** Solomon **ſaith**, A foole beleeveth every thing: Prov. 14. 15. **That copper is gold, and a counter an angell. And aſſuredly great reaſon there is that he which will not beleeve God, ſhould be given over to beleeve the Divel, his dreame, and his fancy.**

Aſun. I pray you inſtruct me better then.

Theol. **You had need indeed to bee better inſtructed: for the Divell hath filly deluded your ſoule, and caſt a miſt before your eyes, making you beleeve**

the

the Crow is white, & that your estate is good before God, whereas indeed it is most woefull and miserable.

Asun. Nay, I defie the Divell with all my heart. But I pray you tell me how it comes to passe that I am thus deceived.

Theol. **This it is that deceiveth you and many others: that you measure your selves by your selves and by others, which is a false met-wand. For you seem to lye straight so long as you are measured by your selves and by others; but lay the rule of Gods word unto you, and then you lye altogether crooked.**

Asun. What other thing is there that deceiveth me?

Theol. **Another thing that deceiveth you is your owne heart: for you know not your owne heart, but are altogether deceived therein.** For the heart is deceivable above all things. **He is a wise man, and greatly enlightned, that knoweth his own heart. But you are blind, and know not what is within you; but dimly imagine you shall be saved, and hope you know not what of eternall life. And because blindnesse maketh you bold, you will seeme to bee resolute in words, and say, It is pity he should live, which doth any whit doubt of his salvation. And assuredly you speake as you thinke, and as you know. For, for ought that you know**

Jer. 17. 9.

to

to the contrary it ſeemeth ſo: though indeed, & in truth it is not ſo: for you are deluded with a falſe light. And ſometimes no doubt you have pricks, gripes, terrours, and inward accuſations of conſcience, for all your bold and reſolute ſpeeches.

Aſ. Truly I never heard ſo much before.

Theol. **That is becauſe you ſhut your eyes, and ſtop your eares againſt God & all goodneſſe. You are** like the deaf Adder, which heareth not the voice of the charmer, though he be moſt expert in charming. Pſal.58. 45.

Aſſu. Well then, if it be ſo, I would be glad now to learne, if you would teach me. And as you have ſhewed mee the meanes whereby the true birth is wrought, ſo now ſhew me the certaine ſignes and tokens thereof, whereby all men may certainly know that they are ſanctified, regenerate, & ſhall be ſaved.

Theol. **There bee eight infallible notes & tokens of a regenerate mind, which may well bee tearmed the eight ſignes of ſalvation; and they are theſe:**

Eight infallible ſignes of ſalvation.

A love to the children of God.
A delight in his word.
Often and fervent prayer.
Zeale of Gods glory.
Deniall of our ſelves.
Patient bearing of the Croſſe with profit and comfort.
Faithfulneſſe in our calling.

Honeſt

Honeſt, juſt, and conſcionable dealing in all our actions amongſt men.

Phil. Now that you have ſhewed us the evident ſigns of mans ſalvatiõ, ſhew us alſo the ſignes of condemnation.

Theol. **The contraries unto theſe are manifeſt ſignes of damnation.**

Eight ſignes of condemnation.

No loue to the children of God.
No delight in his Word:
Seldome and cold Prayers.
Coldneſſe in Gods matters.
Truſting to our ſelues.
Impatience under the Croſſe.
Unfaithfulneſſe in our calling.
Unhoneſt and unconſcionable dealing.

Phil. No doubt if a man be infected with theſe, they be ſhrewd ſignes that a man is extremely ſoule-ſick, & in a very dangerous caſe. But are there none yet more evident and apparent ſignes of condemnation than theſe?

Theol. **Yes verily. There bee nine very cleere and manifeſt ſignes of a mans condemnation.**

Phil. I pray you let me heare what they be.

Nine manifeſt ſignes of damnation.

Theol. **Pride.**
Whoredome.
Couetouſneſſe.
Contempt of the Goſpel.
Swearing.
Lying.
Drunkenneſſe.
Idleneſſe.
Oppreſſion.

Phil.

Phil. Theſe be groſſe things indeed.

Theol. **They may not unfitly be termed the nine** Beelzebubs **of the world; and hee that hath theſe ſignes upon him, is in a moſt wofull caſe.**

Phil. What if a man be infected with ſome two or three of theſe?

Theol. **Whoſoever is infected with three of them, is in great danger of loſing his ſoule. For all theſe be deadly venome, and ranke poyſon to the ſoule: and either the three firſt, or the three laſt, or the middle three, are enough to poyſon the ſoule, and ſting it to death. May, to ſay the truth, a man were as good gripe a toad, and handle a ſnake, as meddle with any one of theſe.**

Phil. Is every one of them ſo dangerous?

Theol. **Queſtionleſſe. For they bee the very plague-ſores of the ſoule. If any man have a plague-ſore upon his body, we uſe to ſay, Gods tokens are upon him, Lord have mercy on him: So we may truly ſay, If any man be throughly and totally infected at the heart with any one of theſe, Gods tokens are upon his ſoule, Lord have mercy upon him.**

Phil. Many doe not think theſe to be ſuch dangerous matters as you make them, and many there be which make light of them.

Theol. **True indeed: for the moſt part**

part of men are altogether ſhut up in blindneſſe and hardneſſe of heart, having neither ſight nor feeling of their ſins, and therefore make light of them, thinking there is no ſuch danger.

Phil. It is moſt certaine that men are given to leſſen and extenuate their ſins: or elſe to hide them, and daube them over with many cunning ſhifts and vain excuſes. For men are ever ready to take covert, and will writhe and wreath (like ſnakes) to hide their ſins: yea, if it were poſſible, to make ſin no ſin, to make vertue vice, and vice vertue. Therefore I pray you lay open unto me out of the Scriptures, the grievouſneſſe and uglineſſe of their ſins.

Theol. **The ſtinking filthineſſe of theſe ſins is ſo great and horrible, that no tongue or pen of man is ſufficient fully to manifeſt & lay open the ſame, according to the proper nature and being thereof: yet notwithſtanding I will doe my endeavour to lay them open in ſome meaſure, that all men may the more loath them.**

Phil. I pray you then firſt of all begin with pride.

Theol. **You ſay well: For that indeed may well ſtand in the fore-front, ſith it is a maſter-diſeaſe, and the maſter-ſocke of the ſoule.**

Phil. Shew me out of the Scriptures that pride is ſo grievous and loathſome.

Theol.

Theol. Solomon **ſaith,** Every one that is proud in heart, is abomination to the Lord: **which plainly ſheweth, that God doth deteſt and abhorre proud men. And is it not a fearfull thing, thinke you, to be abhorred of God? And in the ſame Chap. Ver. 18. he ſaith,** Pride goeth before deſtruction, and an high mind before the fall. **wherein he ſheweth, that pride is the forerunner of ſome deadly downfall, either by diſgracing or diſplacing. For it is an old & true Proverb,** Pride will have a fall. **And oftentimes, when men are moſt lifted up, then are they neereſt unto it: as the examples of** Haman, Nebuchadnezzar, **and** Herod **doe plainly declare. When the milt ſwelleth, the reſt of the body pineth away; even ſo when the heart is puft up with pride, the whole man is in danger of deſtruction. Moreover the holy Ghoſt ſaith,** The Lord will deſtroy the houſe of the proud. Job **ſaith of ſuch kind of men,** The ſpark of his fire ſhall not ſhine: feare ſhall dwell in his houſe, and brimſtone ſhal be ſcattered upon his habitation. **And in another place he ſaith,** The fire which is not blowne ſhall devoure him. **Mee thinkes therefore, if there were any ſparke of grace in us, theſe terrible ſpeeches of the holy Ghoſt might ſerve to humble us, & pull downe our pride: eſpecially ſith the Scriptures doe affirme**

Prov. 16.5

Prov. 15. 24. Job 11. 5. & 25. Job 28. 26.

Job. 23. 13.

firme that God reſiſteth the proud, and ſetteth himſelf *ex profeſſo* againſt them, & therefore woe unto them; for if God take againſt a man, who can reclaime him; for he doth whatſoever he will.

Phil. But tell me, I pray you, when you ſpeak againſt pride, what pride is it that you meane?

Theol. I meane all pride, both that which is inward in the heart, & that alſo which breaketh out in mens foreheads: I meane that which apparently ſhewes it ſelfe in mens words and workes.

Phil. Do you mean pride alſo of mens gifts?

Theol. Yes ſurely: for there is no pride worſe or more dangerous than that. Beware, ſaith one, of ſpirituall pride: as to be proud of our learning, wit, knowledge, reading, writings, ſermons, prayers, godlines, policy, valour, ſtrength, riches, honour, birth, beauty, authority. For God hath not given ſuch gifts unto men, to the end they ſhould make ſale-ware of them, and ſet them a ſun-ſhining to behold; ſeeking only themſelves with their gifts, the vaine praiſe of the multitude, and applauſe of the people: ſo robbing God of his honour, and proudly arrogating to themſelves that which is due unto God, which is the praiſe of his gifts: but he hath given his gifts to another end,

end, namely, that wee should use them to his glory and the good of others (either in Church or Common-wealth) especially of those which do most concerne us.

Phil. Yet we see commonly men of greatest gifts are most proud.

Theol. True indeed: For the finest cloth is soonest stained. And as wormes ingender sooner in soft & tender wood, than in that which is more hard and knotty; and as moths do breed sooner in fine woll, than in course flockes: even so pride & vaine glory do sooner assault an excellent and rare man in all kind of knowledg & vertue, than another of meaner gifts: and therefore pride is said to spring out of the ashes of all vertues. For men will be proud, because they are wise, learned, godly, patient, humble, &c. Pride therefore may very fitly bee compared to the crab-stock spines, which grow out of the root of the very best Apple tree. Therefore to say the truth, this is one of the last engines & weapons which the Divell useth for the overthrowing of Gods owne children, even to blow them up with pride, as it were with gun-powder. For as we see it come to passe in the siege of strong holds, when no battery or force of shot will prevaile, the last remedy & policy is to undermine it, and blow it up with trains

of

of gun-powder; so when Satan can no way prevaile against some excellent servants of God, his last device is to blow them up with pride, as it were with gun-powder.

Phil. I see it is a speciall grace of God, for men of great gifts to bee humble minded: and hee is an odd man of a thousand, which excelling in gifts, excelleth in humility; and the more gifts he hath, the more humbly he walks: not contemning others, but esteeming them better than himselfe. For commonly we are the worse for Gods gifts, because we have not the right use of them; and againe, because they engender so much proud flesh in us, that we had need daily to be corzied. Therefore God sheweth great favour and mercy to that man, whom he humbleth and taketh downe by any afflictions or infirmities whatsoever. For otherwise, it is sure, proud flesh would altogether over grow us.

2 Cor 12. Theol. **You have spoken the truth: for the Apostle himselfe confesseth, that he was tempted & troubled this way, & had like to have bin puffed up out of measure, with the abundance of his revelations, but that God in great mercie sent him a cooler and a rebater; to wit, a prick in the flesh (which he calls the messenger of Satan) whereby the Lord cured him of his pride. And even so doth hee cure many of us of our pride,**

pride, by throwing us to Satan, leaving us to our selves, and giving us over to commit some grosse evill, even to fall downe and break our neckes; and all, to the end he may humble us, tame us, and pull downe our pride, which hee seeth wee are heart-sicke of. It is good for us therefore to bee humble in the abundance of grace, that wee bee not proud of that which we have, or that which we have done. For humility in sinne is better than pride in well-doing.

Phil. Herein surely appeareth the great wisdome and mercie of God: that hee so graciously bringeth good out of evill, and turneth our afflictions, infirmities, fals and down-fals, to his glory and our good.

Theol. It is most true. For even as of the flesh of a Viper is made a soveraigne medicine to cure those which are stung of a Viper; and as Physicians expell poyson with poyson: so God, according to his marvellous wisedome, doth, of the infirmities which remaine in us after regeneration, cure other more dangerous diseases; as pride, vaine-glory, and presumption. Oh blessed therefore be his name for ever, which thus mercifully causeth all things to worke together for the good of his owne people; of whom these things are

specially to bee understood.

Phil. Is there no cause, why men of great gifts should glory in their gifts?

Theol. **No surely none at all. For the Apostle saith,** Who separateth thee? And, what hast thou that thou hast not received? If thou hast received it, why boastest thou, as though thou hadest not received it? **where the Apostle plainely sheweth, that no man is to be proud of his gifts, because they are none of his owne: hee hath but received them to use. We count him worthy to bee laughed at as a foole, who having borrowed brabe apparell of others (as a silke gowne, a sattin doublet, a chaine of gold, velvet breeches, &c.) should proudly jet it in the streets in them, as if they were his owne: even so are they worthy to be chronicled for fooles, which are proud of good gifts, which are none of their owne. Therefore the Prophet** Jeremy **saith:** Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdome, nor the strong man in his strength, neither the rich man in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me. **To this point also well saith the heathen Poet:** No man can escape the punishment of pride; therefore in greatest prosperity be not puffed up.

1 Cor. 4.

Ier. 29. 3.

Theocritus.

Phil. Yet it is a world to see how proud, surly,

ſurly, haughty, ſtately, inſolent, & thraſonicall ſome be, becauſe of their gifts: they think they touch the clouds with their heads, and that the earth doth not beare them: they take themſelves to be petty angels, or ſome wonderful wights: they contemne and diſdaine all others which have not the like gifts: they do contemptuouſly over-look them, as a Lion ſhould over-look a mouſe, a King a begger; or, as we ſay in a proverb, as the Divell looked over Lincoln.

Theol. **Oh proud duſt! Oh haughty wormes meat! If they would bring their hearts before God, and their conſciences, thoughts, and affections to be judged by his Law, it would ſoone coole them, and take them downe well enough; they ſhould ſee their wants and imperfections to be ſo great, that they indeed ſhould have no more cauſe to boaſt of their gifts, than the Blackmoore hath of his whiteneſſe, becauſe his teeth are white. The holy Ghoſt cuts all our combes, and plucketh downe all pride of fleſh, when he ſaith,** *Job* 26.14. How ſmall a thing doth man underſtand of God!

Phil. I pray you let us proceed to ſpeake of the outward and groſſe pride of the world: and firſt of all, tell me what you think of pride in apparell.

Theol. **I thinke it to be a vanity of all vanities, and a folly of all follies**

For to be proud of apparrell, is as if a Theefe should bee proud of his halter, a Begger of his clouts, a Childe of his gay, or a foole of his bable.

Phil. Yet wee see how proud many (specially women) be of such bables. For when they have spent a great part of the day in tricking and trimming, pricking and pinning, pranking and pouncing, girding and lacing, and braving up themselves in most exquisite manner, then out they come into the streets, with their pedlers shop upon their backe, and carry their crests very high, taking themselves to be little angels, or at least somewhat more than other women. Whereupon they do so exceedingly swell with pride, that it is to be feared they will burst with it as they walke in the streets. And truely we may thinke, the very stones in the street, and the beames in the houses doe quake and wonder at their monstrous, intolerable and excessive pride. For it seemeth that they are altogether a lumpe of pride, a masse of pride, even altogether made of pride, and nothing else but pride, pride.

Theol. **You seeme to be very hot in the matter.**

Asun. Marry, Sir, I like him the better: for the world was never so full of pride as it is now a dayes.

Theol. **Alas, alas: indeed who can hold his peace at the pride of this age!**

What

what a thing is it that flesh & bloud, wormes meat, dust and ashes, dirt and dung, should so brave it out with their trim clouts, and that in the sight of God, Angels, and men? For the time will come, when both they and all their gay clouts shall be buried in a grave: Yea, as Job **saith,** The grave shall be their house, and they shall make their bed in the darke. And then they shall say to corruption, Thou art my Father: and to the worme, Thou art my Mother and my Sister. **what then shall it availe them thus to have ruffled it out in all their bravery, when as suddenly they shall goe downe to destruction? what did it profit the rich man to bee sumptuously cloathed, and fare deliciously every day, when his body was buried in the dust, and his soule in hell fire?** Iob 17.13,14

Asun. I pray you, Sir, what say you to these great ruffes, which are borne up with supporters and rebatoes, as it were with post and raile?

Theol. **what should I say? but God be mercifull unto us. For such things do draw downe the wrath and vengeance of God upon us all; and, as the Apostle saith,** for such things sake the wrath of God commeth upon the children of disobedience. **And truly, truly, we may well fear, that God will plague us for our abominable pride.** Gal. 3. 6.

Asun. What say you then to these doubled and redoubled ruffes, (which are now in common use) strouting fardingales, long lockes, fore tufts, shag haire, and all these new fashions which are deuised and taken up every day?

Theol. I say they are far from that plainnesse, simplicity, and modesty, which hath been in former ages: our forefathers knew no such things. It is recorded of William Rufus sometime King of this Land, that when his Chamberlaine on a time brought him a new paire of hose, he demanded of him what they cost: who answered, three shillings: whereat the King, being somewhat moued, commanded him to prepare him a paire of a marke. If Kings were then thought to exceed, that bestowed a marke upon a paire of hose, what is it to bee thought of many meane men in these our dayes (yea such as haue no liuing, and are scarce of any good calling) which bestow as much upon a paire as the King did upon two, when hee was thought most of all to exceed? But alas, alas, we haue passed all bounds of modesty and measure; there is no hoe with us. Our Land is too heavie of this sinne. For the pride of all Nations, and the follies of all Countries are upon us; how shall wee beare them? And as for

Graftons Chron.

for these new fashions, the more new they be, the more foolish, and as foolish they that use them. For with our new fashions we are grown clean out of fashion. If we had as many fashions of our bodies as we have of our attire, we should have as many fashions as fingers and toes. But vaine men and women do apparently shew their vain minds, by following so greedily such vaine toyes and fashions.

Asan. It was never a good world since starching and steeling, buskes and whale-bones, supporters and rebatoes, full moones and hobby-horses, painting and dying, with selling of favour and complexion, came to be in use. For since these came in, covetousnesse, oppression, and deceit have increased. For how else should pride bee maintain'd? and sure it is, within these thirty yeeres these things were not knowne, nor heard of. And what say you then to painting of faces, laying open of naked breasts, dying of haire, wearing, of periwigs, and other haire coronets, and top-gallants? And what say you to our artificiall women, which will be better than God hath made them? They like not his handy worke, they will mend it, and have other complexions, other faces, other haire, other bones, other breasts, and other bellies than God made them.

Theol. This day, that you and I and all the Lords people, have great and just cause of mourning, weeping and lamentation, because such abomination is committed in Israel. Davids eyes gushed out with riuers of teares, because men kept not Gods lawes, and an horrible feare came vpon him, because men forsooke the law of God. Ieremie did sigh in secret wishing that his head were full of water, and his eyes a fountaine of teares, because of the sinnes of the people. Nehemiah mourned for the transgression of Gods people. Lots just soul was vexed with the vnclean conuersation of the Sodomites: and shall wee mourne nothing at all for these things? shall wee bee no whit grieued for the pride of our land? shall wee shed no teares for such horrible and intolerable abominations? They are odious in the sight of God and men: the ayre stinketh of them. It is Gods marueilous patience that the Diuell doth not carry them away quicke, and rid the earth of them: or that fire and brimstone doth not come downe from heaven and consume them.

Psal. 119.

Ier. 9. 1.

Neh. 13.

Ant. You are too hot in these matters of attire: you make more of them than there is cause.

Asun. I con him thanke: Gods bles-

sing

ſing on his heart, I ſhall love him the better while I know him, becauſe he is ſo earneſt againſt ſuch ſhamefull and deteſtable pride. Is it not a ſhame that women profeſsing true religion, ſhould make themſelves ſuch pictures, puppets, and peacockes as they doe? And yet I heare few Preachers in the Pulpit ſpeake againſt it.

Ant. I marvell you ſhould be ſo earneſt in matters of apparell. You know well enough that apparell is an indifferent thing: and that religion and the kingdome of God doth not conſiſt in theſe things.

Theol. **I know right well that apparell in its owne nature is a thing indifferent: but lewd, wanton, immodeſt, and offenſive apparell is not indifferent. For all ſuch abuſe taketh away the indifferency of them, and maketh them ſinfull and evill, by circumſtance. For otherwiſe why ſhould the Lord threaten by his Prophet, that he would viſit the Princes, and the Kings children, and all ſuch as were cloathed with ſtrange apparell, that is, the faſhions of other countries?** Zephan. 1. 8. **Againe, why ſhould the Lord ſo plague the proud dames, and mincing minions of** Jeruſalem, **for their pride and vanity in attire, if there were no evill in ſuch kinde of abuſe? The Lord ſaith thus**

in the 3. of Esay, **against those brave and gallant names,** Because the daughters of Sion are haughty, and walk with stretched out neckes, and with wandring eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and make a tinkling with their feet: therefore shall the Lord make the heads of the daughters of Sion bald, and the Lord shall discover their secret parts. In that day shall the Lord take away the ornament of the slippers, and the calls, and the round tires, the sweet balls, and the bracelets, and the bonnets, the tires of the head & the slops, the head-bands and the tablets, the earings, the rings, and the mufflers, the costly apparell, and the veiles, and the wimples, and the crisping pinnes, and the glasses, and the fine linnen, and the hoods, and the lawnes. And in stead of sweet savour there shall be stinke: and in stead of a girdle, a rent: and in stead of dressing of the haire, baldnesse: and in stead of a stomacher, a girding of sackcloth: and burning instead of beauty. Then shall her gates mourn and lament: and shee being desolate shall sit upon the ground.

Thus we see how terribly the Lord threatneth the gallant dames of Jerusalem **for their excessive and abominable pride. And this may well bee a mirrour for the proud minions of our age: which assuredly may well feare the**

the Lord will bring some such judgements upon them, as hee did upon the daughters of Jerusalem. For their sin is as great in this kinde, as was the daughters of Sion, and God is the same God now that hee was then to punish it.

Antil. Tush, never speak so much of these matters of apparell, For we must do as others do, and follow the fashion, or else we shall not be esteemed.

Theol. If you follow them not, you shall be more esteemed of God, of his Angels, Saints, and all good men. As for all others, if you esteeme them more than these, you shew what you are.

Antil. Well, for all that, say you what you will, pride is in the heart, and not in the apparell: For one may be proud of plaine apparell, as well as of costly. And some are as proud of their falling bands and little sets, as others are of their great ruffes.

Theol. You speak foolishly, For how know you that? Can you judge mens hearts and inward affections? Can you say, when mens and womens apparell is sober, modest and Christian-like, that they have proud hearts, and are proud of that attire? You goe very farre indeed, to judge the heart. You ought to judge charitably of such as goe soberly and modestly

deckly attired, even yet their heart is according to their attire. And for you, we may rather think your heart is vaine, light, and foolish, because your attire doth strongly argue it: And, as the Prophet saith, The very all of your countenance testifieth against you: you declare your sinnes as Sodome, and hide them not, *Esay* 3.9.

Phil. I pray you then set down some rules for apparel out of the Scriptures.

Theol. I may well set downe what I will: but surely most men and women will doe what they list. For verily it may be thought, that many of this age have forsworne God and his word, and all goodnesse. For they are come to this point, let God say what he will, they will doe what they list. For as the Prophet saith, They have made a covenant with hell, and with death, and are grown to an agreement, *Esay* 28.15. And I doe verily thinke, if God himselfe should come downe, from heaven in his owne person, and dissuade men and women from this vanity of apparell, yet would they still use it, as it were in despite of God, and as it were to anger him the more. For they are so extraordinarily enamoured, and so immoderately delighted with it, and doe so continually, and altogether dote on it, and are so wood-mad of it, that they will have it,

it, though Men and Angels, and all the world say nay: nay, which is more, though they should goe to the Divell quicke with it. And therefore it is but lost labour to speake against it, preach against it, or write against it. It is but even to plough the sea, or knocke at a deafe mans doore; for there is no hope of any reformation. Onely this we gaine, that the world is reproved and convicted of sinne. And these things shall stand in a record against them, in the last day: so that they may say, they had a faire warning, and that there was a Prophet among them.

Phil. Yet for all this, I pray you set us down some directions and rules, out of Gods holy Booke, concerning attire. For albeit some be very bad, and outragious in these things, yet there be some others which are well disposed, and will (no doubt) make some conscience to frame themselves according to the rules of Gods Word.

Theol. Well then, for their sakes which are well disposed, I will set downe some few directions. Saint Paul in 1 Tim. 2. 9. willeth, that women should array themselves in comely apparell, with shamefastnesse and modesty, as becommeth women that professe the feare of God: and not with broydered haire, or gold, or pearles,

pearles, or costly apparell. The Apostle Saint Peter giveth like rules also: for he saith, speaking of Christian matrons, and professors of holy religion, That their apparrell must not be outward, that is, not consist so much in outward bravery; as broidered haire, gold put about, &c. as it must be inward, that the hid man of the heart may be clothed with a meek and quiet spirit, which is a thing, before God, much set by. For after this maner, saith hee, in times past, the holy women, which trusted in God, did attire themselves: as Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and such like ancient and grave matrons.

1 Pet. 3.3.

Phil. Wherein doth this inward clothing specially consist?

Theol. In foure things, which are set down in the forenamed places: to wit, shamefastnesse, modesty, a quiet spirit, and a meek spirit.

Phil. These be fine suits of apparell indeed: I would all women would put them on, and never put them off, but weare them continually: for they are the better for wearing, though all other apparell be the worse.

Theol. If women would decke themselves inwardly with these aforesaid vertues, they would bee unto them as ornaments of gold, and jewels of pearle. For the woman that feareth the Lord shall be praised.

Prov. 30. 1.

Phil.

Phil. But now, I pray you, Sir, ſet downe your judgement for outward attire.

Theol. **This is all that I can ſay touching that point, That it muſt bee as the Apoſtle ſaith, comely, decent, handſome, neat and ſeemely: not light, not wanton, not laſcivious, not immodeſt, not offenſive.**

Phil. But who ſhall judge what is comely, ſober, handſome, modeſt? &c. For every man and woman will ſay, their apparell is decent and cleanly, how gallant, brave, and flanting ſoever they be.

Theol. **Herein the examples of the moſt godly, wiſe, grave, and modeſt men and women are to bee followed: for who can better judge what is comely, ſober and modeſt, than they?**

Phil. But wee ſee ſome, even of the better ſort, in this matter are a little infected, run out, and go beyond their bounds.

Theol. **The more is the pity. But alas, we ſee the ſway of the time and rage of the ſtreame is ſo violent, that it carrieth before it whatſoever is not ſettled, and very deep rooted. And ſome godly and well diſpoſed perſons, whoſe hearts are not with theſe things, but with God, are notwithſtanding, perforce carried away with the violence of the winde and tide;**

whoſe

whose case, though it cannot well be defended or excused, yet it is much to be pitied and lamented.

Phil. Have you any further directions touching this point?

Theol. There is one thing yet more to be added: to wit, that attire be according to mens places, callings and degrees. For that is not seemely for one, that is seemely for another; that becomes not one mans place, that becommeth anothers: For that is not meet for poore men, which is meet for rich men: nor that meet for mean men, which is meet for men of note and great place.

Phil. Then you thinke it is lawfull for Kings, Princes, and great Personages, to weare pearle, gold, silver, and velvet, &c.

Theol. Questionlesse it is lawfull for such, in sober manner and measure, to weare the most costly and precious things which the earth can afford: and that to set out the magnificence, pompe, and glory of their places: and therefore such things are in them most comely and decent.

Phil. But now adayes few will keepe within compasse, few will know their places: But the most part run beyond their bounds, and leape quite out of their sockets.

Theol. True indeed. For nowadayes

adayes meere Gentlewomen, yea some Gentlewomen of their owne making, will ruffle it and braue it out in their attire, like Countesses and Ladies of honour. Plaine folk also in the countrey will flaunt it like Courtiers, and like good Gentlemen and Gentlewomen: and they seeme to say in their hearts, Fie of this plainenesse, wee will no more of it: we will not take it as wee haue done. So that now the old prouerbe is verified: Every Jack will be a Gentleman, and Joane is as good as my Lady: for now we cannot, by their apparell, discerne the Maid from the Mistresse; nor the waiting-gentlewoman from her Lady. And thus wee see in this matter of apparell how all is out of joint.

Phil. Is there any more to be said in this case?

Theol. There is yet another thing to bee respected in this matter of attire.

Phil. What is that?

Theol. That it bee according to mens abilities. For it is lamentable to consider how poore men and women, poore hired seruants, milke-maides, and such like, goe quite beyond their ability. And more lamentable to see what wretched and ill-fauoured shifts they make to compasse these things: so sharpe and so

so eagerly are they set upon them.

Phil. Well Sir, now you have sufficiently rolled the stone, and at large satisfied us touching the matter of pride, which is the first signe of condemnation. Now proceed to the second, which is whoredome; and unfold unto us, out of the Scriptures, the danger thereof.

Theol. Solomon, in his Proverbs, saith; That the mouth of a strange woman [or an harlot] is as a deep pit: he that is a detestation to the Lord, shall fall therein. wherein he plainly sheweth, that those whom God detesteth, and is exceeding angry with, are given over to this vice. And in another place he saith: A whore is as a deepe ditch, and as a narrow pit. Noting thereby, that if a man bee once fallen in with an harlot, hee shall as hardly get out againe, as a man that is plunged into a very deep and narrow pit, where hee can scant stirre himselfe. The same Solomon, in the book of Ecclesiastes, yeelds us the reason hereof; namely, because she is as nets, snares and bands, wherein if a man be once taken, hee is fast enough for getting out. I finde, saith he, more bitter than death, the woman whose heart is as nets and snares, and her hands as bands. He that is good before God, shall be delivered from her: but the sinner shall be taken by her. We do therefore plainely

Prov. 32. 14.

Prov. 13. 17.

Eccles. 7. 28.

see in what a labyrinth and dangerous case they bee, that are left of God and given over to whoredome and harlots: and therefore it is said, Desire not her beauty in thine heart, neither let her eye-lids catch thee: for by a whorish woman, a man is brought to a morsell of bread; and the adultéresse hunteth for life, which is precious. **Againe he saith,** Albeit the lips of an harlot drop as an hony-comb, and the roofe of her mouth is softer than oyle: yet her latter end is bitter as wormewood, and as sharp as a two edged sword. **All these prudent speeches of the holy Ghost, doe most evidently shew unto us what a fearfull thing it is to commit whoredome, and so to fall into the hands of whores and harlots. Therefore** Job **saith of the wicked,** their soule dieth in youth, and their life among the whoremongers

Prov. 6. 5.

Prov. 5. 3, 4.

Iob. 36. 14.

Phil. You have very well shewed out of Gods booke, the great danger of Whoredome and Adultery. And it is greatly to bee lamented, that men in this age make so light of it as they doe, and that it is so common a vice: nay, that some (alas, with griefe I speak it) do professe it, live by it, and prostitute themselves wholly unto it.

Theol. **Such men and women may justly feare the plaguing hand of God; for the Lord saith by his Prophet;**

Though

Ier. 5. 7. Though I fed them to the full, yet they committed adultery, and assembled themselves by companies in harlots houses. They rose up in the morning like fed horses: for every man neighed after his neighbours wife. Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord? Shall not my soule be avenged on such a nation?

Phil. Me thinks, if men were not altogether hardened in this sin, and even past feeling, and past grace, this threatning and thundring of God himselfe from heaven should terrifie them.

Theol. **A man would thinke so indeed: but now wee may take up the old complaint of the Prophet,** I Ier. 8. 6. hearkened and heard, and loe, no man spake aright: no man repented him of his evill; saying, What have I done? Every one turneth to their race, as the horse rusheth into the battell.

Antil. Tush, whoredome is but a tricke of youth; and wee see all men have their imperfections.

Theol. **You speake prophanely and wickedly: for shall wee count that but a tricke of youth for the which the Lord smote three and twenty thousand of his owne people in one day?** 1 Cor. 10. 8. **Shall we count that but a tricke of youth, for the which the Lord threatned David, his owne servant, that the sword should never depart from his** 2 Sam. 12. 10.

house?

houſe? ſhall wee count that but a tricke of youth, for the which Hamor and Sechem, the father and the ſonne, and many other, both men, women and children, were cruelly murdered by Simeon and Levi, the ſonnes of Jacob? Shall wee count that but a trick of youth, for the which the Lord ſlew Hophni and Phineas, the two ſons of Eli the Prieſt, in the battle of the Philiſtines? Shall wee thus ſet all at ſix and ſeven, and make light of ſuch horrible villanies? Doth not the ſeverity of the punishment ſhew the greatneſſe of the ſinne? Doth not the Apoſtle ſay, Theſe things came unto them for our examples, upon whom the ends of the world are come? And yet you paſſe it over with a tuſh, and a trick of youth, as if God were to be dallied with. No, no, bee not deceived; God is not mocked. They which will not be moved now in hearing, ſhall one day be cruſhed in pieces in feeling. And they which now call whoredome a tricke of youth, ſhall one day howle and cry, yell and yelp for ſuch trickes, with woe and alas that ever they were borne.

Gen. 34.25.

1 Sam. 4. 11.

1 Cor. 10. 11

Antil. Oh Sir, you muſt beare with youth: youth you know is fraile; and youth will be youthfull, when you have ſaid all that you can.

Theol. Yea, but God doth allow no more

more liberty unto youth than unto age: but bindeth all upon paine of death, to the obedience of his commandements. The Apostle saith: Tit. 2. 6. Let young men be sober minded. David Psal. 119. 9. saith: Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? In taking heed thereto according to thy word. The wise man saith, Remember thy Creator in the Eccles. 12. 1. dayes of thy youth. And further addeth: that if they will needs follow their lusts, their pleasures, and their owne swinge: yet in the end hee will bring them to judgement, arraigne them, condemne them, and tame them in hell fire well enough.

Phil. Yet we see men are so violently carried after their lusts, and so desperately bent, that they will have the present sweet and pleasure of sin, come of it what will. Come sickenesse, come death, come hell, come damnation, they are at a point: they will pay the highest price for their lust. They will purchase their pleasures with the losse of their soules. O wofull purchase! O damnable pleasures!

Theol. Sweet meat will have soure sauce, and a dramme of pleasure, a pound of sorrow. Such cursed Caitifs shall at last pay a deare shot for their pleasures. Such desperate wretches shall one day know (to their everlasting woe) what it is to provoke

bake God, and to sinne with so high an hand against him. They shall well know, in spight of their hearts, that vengeance is prepared for the wicked, and that there is a God that judgeth the earth. Let all men therefore take heed in time; for whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. And the Apostle saith flatly, That whoremongers and adulterers shall not inherite the kingdome of God. Let therefore no fornicator or unclean person be found among us, as was *Esau*: but let us abstaine from fleshly lusts, which fight against the soule. And let every one know how to possesse his vessell in holinesse and honour, and not in the lust of concupiscence, as the Gentiles which know not God, 1 Thes. 4. 5.

Heb. 13. 4. 1 Cor. 6. 9. Heb. 12. 1 Pet. 1. 2.

Herein let us consider the wise speech of an ancient Father: Sinne, while it is in doing, ministreth some pleasure; but when it is committed, the short pleasure thereof vanisheth away, and long sorrow commeth in stead of it. **Neither let us here reject the saying of a wise Heathen:** Shunne pleasure for feare of smart. Soure things follow sweet, and joy heavinesse.

Chrysost. in Matth. Isocrat. ad Demon.

Antil. Yet for all this you shall not make me beleeve, that whoredome is so hainous a matter. You make more of it than it is.

Theol. **True indeed: For you, and such**

such as you are, will beleeve nothing against your lusts & fleshly delights: and that is the cause why you care deare on this side. I will therefore adde a word or two more (out of the Oracles of God) to that which hath beene spoken. The wise King saith, Prov. 6. 32. He that committeth adultery with women, destroyeth his owne soule: and so is accessary to his owne death; which is no small matter. For we use to say, if a man hang himselfe, drowne himselfe, or any manner of way make away himselfe; that hee was cursed of God, that Gods hand was heavie against him, that the Divell ought him a shame, and now he hath paid it him. And all the Country rings of such a strange accident, when, and where it falleth out: and the Crowner of the Country doth sit upon it. How much more may all the world wonder at this; that a man should destroy his owne soule, and wittingly and willingly cast away himselfe for ever? Now the holy Ghost saith, The adulterer doth such an act, giveth such a venture, and willingly murthereth himselfe. Oh therefore woe unto him that ever he was borne! for sure it is, that the great Crowner of heaven, that crowneth whom he will crowne, shall one day sit upon it, and give judgement. Moreover, as the adulterer

terer ſinneth againſt his ſoule, ſo alſo hee ſinneth againſt his body, after a ſpeciall manner, as witneſſeth the Apoſtle. Alſo hee ſinneth againſt his goods and outward eſtate, as the holy man Job teſtifieth, ſaying; Adultery is a fire that devoureth to deſtruction, and it will root out all our increaſe. Furthermore, he ſinneth againſt his name, For the Adulterer ſhall finde a wound, and diſhonour: and his reproach ſhall never be put away.

1 Cor. 6. 18.

Iob 31. 12.

Prov. 6. 33.

Item, hee ſinneth againſt his wife, who is his companion, and the wife of his covenant: And God ſaith in the ſame place: Let none treſpaſſe againſt the wife of his youth: keep your ſelves in your ſpirit, and tranſgreſſe not. Laſt of all, hee ſinneth againſt his children and poſterity, as the Lord ſaid to David, Becauſe thou haſt deſpiſed me, and done this, therefore the ſword ſhall never depart from thy houſe. Behold, I will raiſe up evill againſt thee out of thine owne houſe. Now therefore, to conclude this point, wee may ſee how many deadly wounds men make themſelves by committing of adultery. They wound themſelves in their ſoules: they wound themſelves in their bodies: they wound themſelves in their goods: they wound themſelves in their names: they wound themſelves in their wives, and in

Mal. 2. 14. 15

2 Sam. 12. 10

their children. What man, except hee were ſtark mad, would thruſt in himſelfe in ſo many places at once? The Adulterer with his one ſinne of adultery, maketh all theſe deadly wounds in himſelfe: and it is an hundred to one he will never get them cured, but will dye, and bleed to death of them. Lo, thus you ſee the dangerous quality and condition of this ſin. Shall wee now therefore make light of it? Shall wee ſay, it is but a trick of youth? Shall wee ſmooth over the matter with ſweet words, when the holy Ghoſt maketh it ſo haineus and capitall? Shall we make nothing of that which draweth downe Gods wrath upon the ſoule, body, goods, name, wife, and children? That were an intolerable blindneſſe, and moſt extreme hardneſſe of heart. An ancient writer hath long ago paſſed ſentence upon us, who make ſo light of this ſinne: for (ſaith hee) adultery is the very hooke of the Divell, whereby hee draweth us to deſtruction. And another godly Father ſaith, that adultery is like a furnace, whoſe mouth is gluttony, the flame pride, the ſparkles filthy words, the ſmoak an ill name, the aſhes poverty, and the end ſhame. And ſo wee plainely ſee, that howſoever wee regard not this ſinne, but flatter our ſelves in it, yet thoſe whoſe eyes the

Baſil. in Epiſt.

Gregor.

the Lord hath opened, have in all ages condemned it, as most flagitious and horrible: yea, the very Heathen will rise up in judgement against us, who have spoken and written many things against this filthy and beastly vice.

Phil. Now indeed you have sufficiently branded the vice of adultery, and laid out the uglinesse thereof, that all men may behold it starke naked, and abhorre it. If any man (notwithstanding all this) will venture upon it, he may be said to be a most desperat monster. For what doth he else, but (as it were) put his finger into the Lions mouth, and (as it were) take the Beare by the tooth? and they may well know what will follow, and what they may looke for. Let all men therefore in time take heed to themselves, and to their owne soules, as they will answer it at their uttermost perill at the dreadfull day of judgement, when the secrets of all hearts shall bee disclosed. But now one thing resteth; to wit, that you should shew us the speciall roots and causes of adultery.

Theol. **There be five speciall causes of it: The first is our naturall corruption: for the very spawne and seed of all sin is our corrupt nature: and this, of all other, is a most inherent sinne, as witnesseth the Apostle** Iames, **saying,** When lust hath con- Iam. 1. 15.

ceived, it bringeth forth ſinne: and ſin when it is perfected, bringeth forth death.

The ſecond is gluttony, and fulneſſe of bread: for when men have filled their bellies, and crammed their paunches as full of good cheere, wine, and ſtrong drinke, as their skinnes can hold; what are they meet for, or what mind they elſe, but adultery and uncleannesſe? And therefore well ſaith one, Great nouriſhment and groſſe food is the ſhop of luſt. **The Heathen Poet could skill to ſay,** *Sine Cerere & Baccho friget Venus*, without meat and drinke luſt waxeth cold. **And to this effect the wiſe King ſaith, that** their eyes ſhall behold ſtrange women, whoſe hearts are ſet upon wine & belly-cheer. **And therefore he adviſeth all men,** not to looke upon the wine when it appeareth red, when it ſheweth his colour in the cup, **or ſtirreth very kindly: and that for feare of this after-clap. An ancient writer ſaith to the ſame purpoſe:** He that delicately pampereth his belly, and yet would overcome the ſpirit of fornication, is like to him that will quench a flame of fire with oyle.

Prov. 23. 3. & 33.

Gregorius Nazianz.

Therefore to cloſe up this point, ſure it is, though men pray, heare, and read much, and be otherwiſe well diſpoſed: yet except they be abſtemious in diet, they will be much troubled with luſt. Th

The third cause of adultery is Idlenesse: for when men are lazie, lushish, and idle, having nothing to doe, they lye wide open to adultery; and lust creepeth into them. Some Historiographers write, the Crab-fish is very desirous to eat Oysters: but because shee cannot perforce open them; shee watcheth her time when they open themselves unto the sun after the tide, and then shee putteth in her claw, and pulleth out the Oyster: Even so Satan watcheth his opportunity against us that hee may inject and breath into us all filthy lusts, and adulterous desires, when we lye open unto him by idlenesse. Wherefore to this point saith the Greeke Poet: Much rest nourisheth lust. And another Poet saith: Hesiodus.

Quæritur Ægystus quare sit factus adulter.

In promptu causa est: desidiosus erat.

Sloathfull laziness is the cause of adultery: And therefore another saith, Eschew idleneſſe, and cut the very sinews of lust. Otia si tollas, periere Cupidinis arcus.

The fourth cause of Adultery, is wanton apparell: which is a minstrellesse, that pipes up a dance unto whoredome. But of this enough before.

The fift and last cause of adultery,

is the hope of impunity, or escaping of punishment. For many being blinded and hardned by Satan, thinke they shall never bee called to an account for it: and because they can blear the eyes of men, and carry this sinne so closely under a cloud, that it shall never come to light, they thinke all is safe, and that God seeth them not.

Iob 24.15. And therefore Job saith, The eye of the adulterer waiteth for the twi-light, and saith, No eye shall see me. And in

Iob 23.13. another place, How shall God know? Can he judge through the dark cloud? But verily, verily, though the adulterer do never so closely and cunningly convey his sinne under a canopy, yet the time will come, when it shall be discloſed to his eternall shame. For

Eccl.12.24. God will bring every worke to judgement, with every secret thought, whether it be good or evill. For he hath set

Psal.90. our most secret sinnes in the sight of his countenance. And he will lighten

1 Cor. 4. the things that are hid in darknes, and make the counsels of the heart manifest. For this cause Job saith,

Iob.10. When I sinne thou watchest me, and wilt not purge me from my sinne.

Phil. Now you have shewed us the causes of adultery, I pray you shew us the remedies.

Theol. There bee six remedies for adultery, which no doubt will great-

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ly prevaile, if they be well practised.

Phil. Which be they?

Theol. Labour.
Abstinence.
Temperance.
Prayer.
Restraint of our senses.
Shunning of womens company, and all occasions whatsoever.

Six remedies of adultery.

Phil. Well Sir, now you have waded deep enough in the second signe of damnation: I pray you let us proceed to the third, which is covetousnesse. And as you have laid naked the two former, so I pray you strippe this starke naked also, that all men may see what an ugly monster it is, and therefore hate it and abhorre it.

Theol. I would willingly satisfie your minde: but in this point I shall never do it sufficiently. For no heart can conceive, or tongue sufficiently utter the loathsomenesse of this vice. For covetousnesse is the foulest fiend, and blackest Divell of all the rest. It is even great Beelzebub himselfe. Therefore I shall never bee able fully to describe it unto you: but I will doe what I can to strip and whip it starke naked. And howsoever the men of this earth and blind worldlings take it to be most sweet, beautifull, and amiable, and therefore doe embrace it,

entertain it, and welcome it, as though there were some happinesse in it: yet, I hope, when I have shewed them the face thereof in a glasse (even the true glasse of Gods word) they will be no more in such love, but quite out of conceit with it. I will therefore hold out this glasse unto them.

St. Paul to Timothy brandeth this sinne in the forehead, and boareth it in the eares, that all men may know it, and avoid it, when hee saith, Covetousnesse is the root of all evill. Our Lord Jesus also giveth us a watchword to take heed of it, saying, Take heed and beware of covetousnesse. As if hee should say, Touch it not, come not neare it, it is the very breath of the Divell, it is present death, and the very rats-bane of the soule. The Apostle layeth out the great danger of this sin, and doth exceedingly grinde the face of it, when he saith, That the end of all such as minde earthly things, is damnation. Let all carnall worldlings, and muckish minded men lay this to heart and consider well of it, lest they say one day, Had I wist.

1 Tim. 6. 10

Luk 12. 15.

Phil. 3. 19.

Phil. Good Sir, lay open unto us the true nature of covetousnesse, and what it is, that wee may more perfectly discerne it.

Theol. Covetousnesse is an immoderate desire of having.

Phil.

Phil. I hope you do not think frugality thriftineſſe, and good husbandry, to bee covetouſneſſe.

Theol. **Nothing leſſe: For they be things commanded; being done in the feare of God, and with a good conſcience.**

Phil. Doe you not thinke it lawfull alſo for men to doe their worldly buſineſſe, and to uſe faithfulneſſe and diligence in their callings, that they may provide for themſelves and their families?

Theol. **Yes, no doubt. And the rather, if they doe theſe things with calling upon God for a bleſſing upon the workes of their hands, and uſe prayer and thankſgiving before and after their labour, taking heed all the day long of the common corruptions of the world: as ſwearing, curſing, lying, diſſembling, deceiving, greedy getting, &c.**

Phil. Wherein, I pray you, doth covetouſneſſe eſpecially conſiſt?

Theol. **In the greedy deſire of the minde. For we may lawfully doe the workes of our calling, and play the good husbands and good huſwives: but wee muſt take heed that diſtruſtfulneſſe, and inward greedineſſe of the world doe not catch our hearts. For then we are let one ſtee, and utterly undone.**

Phil. Sith covetousnesse is especially of the heart, how may we know certainly when the heart is infected?

Theol. **There be foure speciall signes of the hearts infection.**

Phil. Which be they?

Theol. **The first is an eager and sharp-set desire of getting. Therefore the holy Ghost saith,** Hee that hasteth to bee rich, shall not bee unpunished. **And againe,** An heritage is hastily gotten at the beginning: but the end thereof shall not be blessed. **The Heathen man also saith,** no man can bee both justly and hastily rich.

Prov. 28.

Prov. 20. 2.

Demosthenes in Olinth. 2.

The second is a pinching and niggardly keeping of our owne: that is, when men (being able to give) will hardly part with any thing, though it be to never so holy and good use. And when at last, with much adoe, for shame they give something, it commeth heavily from them (God wot) and scantily.

The third is the neglect of holy duties: that is, when mens mindes are so taken up with the love of earthly things, that they begin to slack and coole in matters of Gods worship.

The fourth and last is a trusting in riches, and staying upon them, as though our lives were maintained by them, or did consist onely in them: which thing our Lord Jesus flatly denyeth,

denyeth, saying, Though a man have abundance, yet his life consisteth not in the things that he hath. Luk 12.15.

These then are foure evident signes and tokens, whereby wee may certainly discerne, that mens hearts and entrails are infected with covetousnesse.

Phil. You have very well satisfied us in this point. Now let us understand the originall causes of covetousnesse.

Theol. **There be two speciall causes of Covetousnesse: The one is the ignorance and distrust of Gods providence.** Two causes of covetousnesse.

The other is the want of tasting, and feeling of heavenly things. For till men taste better things, they will make much of these: till they feele heaven, they will love earth: till they bee religious, they will be covetous. Therefore the cause is soone espyed, why men are so sharp-set upon these outward things, and doe so admire riches, worldly pompe, pleasures, and treasures: Because they know no better, they never had taste nor feeling of those things which are eternall.

Phil. Now as you have shewed us the causes of Covetousnesse, so let us also heare of the effects.

Theol. **If I once enter into this, I shall be entangled and wound up in a maze, where I know not how to get**

get out againe. For the evill effects of this vice are so many, and so great, that I know not almost where to beginne, or where to end. Notwithstanding, I will enter into it, get out how I can.

Phil. If you do but give us some taste of them, it shall suffice.

Theol. Then will I briefly dispatch things in order. And first of all, I reason from the words of the Apostle before alledged, That if covetousnes, and the love of money be the root of all evill, then it is the root of idolatry, the root of murther, the root of theft, the root of lying, the root of swearing, the root of symony, the root of bribery, the root of usury, the root of lawing, the root of all contentions in the Church, and the root of all brabbling and brawling in the Common-wealth. Moreover, it spreadeth farre and neare, it dwelleth in every house, in every towne, in every city: it pryeth into every corner, it creepeth into every heart; it annoyeth our Physicians, it infecteth our Divines, it choaketh our Lawyers, it woundeth our Farmers, it baneth our Gentlemen, it murthereth our tradesmen, it bewitcheth our Merchants, it stingeth our Mariners. O covetousnes, covetousnes! It is the poyson of all things, the wound of Christianity, the bane

bane of all goodneſſe. For couetouſneſſe marres all: it marreth all every where, in all places, in all degrees, among all perſons. It marreth marriages; for it coupleth young to old, and old to young. It marreth hoſpitality, it marreth all good houſe-keeping, it marreth almſ-deeds, it marreth Religion, it marreth Profeſſors, it marreth Miniſters, it marreth Magiſtrates, it marreth all things. And therefore, what ſin ſo grievous, what euill ſo odious, what vice ſo enormous as this? For this cauſe it was prettily ſaid of one, That all other vices are but factors to couetouſneſs, & ſerue for Porters to fetch and bring in her living. Shee maketh ſymony her drudge, bribery her drudge, uſury her drudge, deceit her drudge, ſwearing her drudge, lying her drudge. O what a Diuell incarnate is this, that ſetteth ſo many vices a worke, & hath ſo many factors and underlings to ſerue her turne! Are they not in a pretty caſe, think you, that are infected with this ſinne? Oh, they are in a moſt miſerable caſe. It had beene good they had never beene borne. For being alive, they are dead: dead, I meane, in their ſoules. For couetouſneſſe is ſoules poyſon and ſoules bane. Couetouſneſſe is the ſtrongeſt poyſon to the ſoul that is. It is a confection of all the Spiders,

Toades,

Toades, Snakes, Adders, Scorpions, Basiliskes, and all other the most venemous vermine of the whole world. If the divell can get us to take downe but one penny weight of it, it is enough, hee desires no more. For presently wee fall downe starke dead. Therefore the Apostle saith, They that will bee rich (hee meaneth in all haste, by hook or by crook) fall into temptations and snares, and into many foolish and noysome lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For as covetousnesse is ranke poyson to the soule: so the Apostle compareth it to a deepe gulfe wherein thousands are drowned. And therefore he addeth in the same place, But thou, O man of God, flie these things. In which words hee doth most gravely advise all the Ministers of the word of God to take heed of it. For as it is dangerous in all men: so is it most dangerous and offensive in Preachers of the Gospel.

1 Tim. 6.

Phil. Indeed it must needs bee granted, that covetousnesse is a very grievous sinne: yea, even a Monster with seven heads. Yet for all that, wee see in this our iron age, how many of all sorts are infected with it, and how few will give any thing to any holy use. Most men now adayes have nothing to spare for Christ, nothing for his Gospel, nothing for his Church, nothing for

for the poore children of God and needie members of Christ. Christ is little beholden unto them: for they will doe nothing for him, no not so much as speake a good word in his cause, or the cause of his poore Saints. Every little thing with them is too much for God, and good men. For when they come to giving unto holy and necessary uses, then they will stick at a penny, & grudge at a groat, and every thing is too much: But to bestow upon themselves, nothing is too much. Nothing is too much for lust, for pleasure, for back, belly, and building, for cards and dice, for whores and harlots, for rioting and revelling, for Tavernes and Brothel-houses. Hundreds and thousands are little enough, and too little for their expences this way. It is lamentable to consider, what masses of mony are spent and bestowed upon these things. But, alas, alas, how heavie an account are they to make in the day of the lord, which so spend their lands, livings, and revenues! I quake to thinke what shall become of them at last. It were well for them, if they might bee in no worse case than a Crocodile or a Cur-dog.

Theol. **It is most certaine that you say: and wee all have great cause to lament it, and to take up the old complaint of the Prophet** Jeremy, **saying,** From the least of them, even unto the greatest

greateſt of them, every one is given unto Covetouſnes: and from the Prophet even unto the Prieſts, they all deal falſly. And another Prophet ſaith, They build up Sion with bloud, & Jeruſalem with iniquity. The heads thereof judge for rewards, & the Prieſts thereof teach for hire, & the Prophets therof propheſie for mony: yet will they lean upon the Lord, and ſay; Is not the Lord amongſt us? No evil can come unto us. But theſe holy Prophets, and men of God, do fully deſcribe unto us the ſtate of our time: wherein, though all be corrupted, yet wee beare our ſelves ſtoutly upon God, we preſume of his favour, becauſe of our outward profeſſion, and ſay in our hearts No evill can come unto us.

Mich. 3. 22.

Aſun. You ſay very true, Sir. The world was never ſo ſet upon covetouſnes, and men were never ſo greedily given to the world, as now adaies. And yet (in truth) there is no cauſe why men ſhould be ſo ſharp-ſet upon this world. For this world is but vanity: and all is but pelf and traſh. Fie on this muck.

Phil. Many ſuch men as you are can skil to give good words, and ſay, Fie on this world, all is but vanity: & yet for al that in your daily practice you are never the leſſe ſet upon the world, nor never the more ſeek after God. You hear the word of God no whit the more, you read no whit the more, you pray never the more

which

which evidently sheweth, that all your faire speeches, and protestations, are nought else but hypocrisie and leasing. Your heart is not with God, for all this. All is but words, there is no such feeling in the heart. And therefore I may justly say to you, as God himselfe said to his people, This people have said well, all that they have said. Oh, that there were an heart in them to feare me, and keepe my commandements! Deut. 5. 28.

Theol. His words indeed are good, if his heart were according. For all things considered, there is no cause why men should bee so given to this world: for they must leave it when they have done all that they can. As wee say, To day a man, to morrow none. And, as the Apostle saith, We brought nothing into this world: and it is certaine, we shall carry nothing out. We must all dye, we know not how soone: why therefore should men set their hearts upon such uncertainties, and deceiveable things? for all things in this world are more light then a feather, more brittle than glasse, more fleeting than a shadow, more vanishing than smoake, more unconstant than the winde: Doubtlesse, saith the Prophet David, man walketh in a shadow, and disquieteth himselfe in vain: he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them. I wonder there- 1 Tim. 6. Psal. 39. 6.

therefore, that these Moles and Muck-wormes of this earth should so minde these shadowish things, and so dote on them as they doe. If they were not altogether hardned and blinded by the Divell, they would not bee so neerely knit to the clod and the penny as they are; thinking and alwayes imagining, that there is no happinesse but in these things, which are but dung, and drosse: and at last they will give us the slip, when wee think our selves most sure of them.

The wise King, who had the greatest experience of these things that ever man had (for hee enjoyed whatsoever this world could afford, upward and downward, backward and forward) yet could he finde nothing in them but vanity and vexation of spirit. Moreover, hee flatly avoucheth, That all these things, riches, wealth, honour, pleasures and treasures, will most notably deceive us in the end, give us the slip, and be gone. For he compareth riches, and all the glory of the world, to an Eagle or Hawke, which a man holdeth upon his fist, stroketh her, maketh much of her, taketh great delight and pleasure in her, and saith, he will not take ten pounds for her, yet all on the sudden shee taketh her flight, and flyeth up into the ayre, and he never seeth her more, nor she him. The

words

words of the holy Ghost are these, Will thou cause thine eyes to flie after them (meaning riches)? Thou maiest: but they will not bee found. For they will make themselves wings like to the Eagle, which flieth up to heaven. From thence we may learne, that though we set our hearts never so much on any thing here below, yet at the last it shall be taken from us, or we from it. Prov. 23. 5.

Therefore all worldly men doe but weave the Spiders web, and may fitly bee compared to the silly Spider, who toyleth her selfe, and laboureth all the weeke long to finish up her web, that shee may lodge her selfe in it as in her owne house and free-hold. But, alas, at the weekes end, a maid in a moment, with one brush of a brome, dispossesseth her of her inheritance, which shee had purchased with great labour and much adoe. Even so, when the men of this world have with much care and travell purchased great lands and revenues, and gathered all that they can; yet on the sudden death (with one stroke of his direfull dart) will make them give up the ghost: and then where are they? It was prettily therefore said of a man in the light of nature, No man hath ever lived so happily in this life, but in his life time many things have befallen him, for the which hee hath wished rather to die than Seneca.

than to live. And assuredly, I think there was never any man lived any one day upon the face of this earth, but some griefe or other either did, or justly might invade his minde ere night: either in the temptations of the world, the flesh, or the Divell; or in regard of soule, body, goods, or name: in regard of wife, children, friends, or neighbours: in regard of dangers to Prince, State, Church, or Common-wealth: in regard of casualties, and losse by water, by fire, by sea or by land. What a life therefore is this, that hath not one good day in it? who would desire to dwell long in it? For it lieth open every day to manifold miseries, dangers, losses, casualties, reproaches, shame, infamy, poverty sicknesse, diseases, cholicks, agues tooth-ache, head-ache, back-ache, bone-ache, and a thousand calamities.

Phil. You have very well described unto us the vanity of this life, and that no day is free from one sorrow or other, one griefe or other: the which thing our Lord Jesus ratifieth in the reason which hee bringeth why men should not distrustfully care for to morrow. For, saith hee, sufficient to the day is the evill thereof: Or, as some read it, The day hath enough with his owne griefe. Wherein hee doth plainly shew that every day hath his sor-

row,

row, his evill, his griefe, and his thwart. But I pray you proceed further in this point.

Theol. **This I say further: That when men have swinked & sweat, carked and cared, moiled and turmoiled, drudged & drotled, by night & by day, by sea and by land, with much care and sorrow, much labour and griefe, to rake together the things of this life; yet at last all will away againe, and we must end where we began. For as** Job said, **Naked we came into the world,** Iob 1. **and naked we must goe out. For, even as a wind-mill beateth it selfe, maketh a great noise, whistleth and whisketh about from day to day all the yeare long, yet at the yeares end standeth still where it begun, being not moved one foot backward or forward: so when men have blustred and blown all that they can, and have even run themselves out of breath, to scrape up the commodities of the earth, yet at last they must (spite of their beards) end where they began; end with nothing as they began with nothing: end with a winding sheet, as they began with swadling clouts. For what is become of the greatest Monarches, Kings, Princes, Potentates, and Magnificoes, that ever the World had? where is Cyrus, Darius, Xerxes, Alexander, Cæsar, Pompey, Scipio,**

Scipio and Hannibal? Where are the valiant Henries, and noble Edwards of England? Are they not all gone downe to the house of oblivion? Are they not all returned to their dust, and their thoughts perish? Though they were as gods, yet have they died as men, and are fallen like others.

Who now careth for them? who talketh of them? who feareth them? who regardeth them? do not beggers tread upon them? Yet while they lived they were the Lords of the world; they were as terrible as Lions, fearefull to all men, full of pompe and glory, dignity & majesty. They ploughed up all things, they bare all before them, and who but they? But now they have given up the ghost, and are (as Job saith) gone down to the house appointed for all the living. Their pompe is descended with them, and all their glory is buried in the ashes. They are now covered under a clod, cast out into a vault, made companions to toads, and the wormes do eat them: and what is become of their soules, is most of all to be feared.

Iob 30.23.

Thus we see, how all flesh doth but make a vaine shew for a while upon this Theatre of misery, fetcheth a compasse about, and is presently gone. For, as the Poet saith, *Serius aut citius sedem properamus ad unam*: First or

or last wee must all to the grave.

Aſun. You have made a very good ſpeech, it doth mee good to heare it. I wonder, all theſe things conſidered, that men ſhould be ſo wholly given to this world, as they are. I thinke the Divell hath bewitched them: for they ſhall carry nothing with them when they die, but their good deeds and their ill.

Theol. **The Drudges and Snudges of this world may very fitly bee compared to a Kings Sumpter-horſe, which goeth loaden all the day long with as much gold and treaſure as hee can beare, but at night his treaſure is taken from him, hee is turned into a ſorry dirty ſtable, and hath nothing left him but his galled backe: Even ſo the rich Cormorants and Caterpillers of the earth, which here have treaſured and hoorded up great heapes of gold and ſilver (with the which they travell loaden through this world) ſhall in the end bee ſtript out of all, let downe into their grave, and have nothing left them but their galled conſciences, with the which they ſhall bee tumbled downe into the dungeon of eternall darkneſſe.**

Phil. Wherein doth the ſting and ſtrength of this world eſpecially conſiſt?

Theol. **Even as the great ſtrength of Samſon lay in his haire, ſo the great ſtrength of the world lyeth in her two breaſts;**

breasts; the one of pleasure, the other of profit. For shee, like a notable strumpet, by laying out of these her breasts, doth bewitch the sons of men, and alloureth thousands to her lust. For if shee cannot win them with the one breast, yet shee gaineth them with the other: if not with pleasure, then with profit, if not with profit, then with pleasure: He is an odde man of a thousand, that sucketh not of the one breast or the other. But sure it is, which soever hee sucketh hee shall bee poysoned. For she giveth none other milke but ranke poyson. The world therefore is like to an alluring Iael, which sitteth at her doore to entice us to come in, and eat of the milke of her pleasures: but when she hath once got us in, shee is ready (even while we are eating) with her hammer and her naile, to pierce thorow our braines.

Iudg. 4. 21.

Phil. I see plainely, this world is a very strumpet, a strong baite, and a snaring net, wherein thousands are taken. It is very bird-lime, which doth so belime our affections that they cannot ascend upward. It is like the weights of a clock, hanged upon our soules, which draw them downe to the earth; it naileth us fast down to the ground: it mortereth us into clay: it maketh us abominable unto God. For I remember

God

God made a Law, That whosoever goeth with his breast upon the ground, should bee abominable unto us. How much more these carnall worldlings, which are fast sodred to the earth! Lev. 11.

Theol. **The Apostle S. James, seeing into the very wickednes of this world and knowing right well how odious it maketh us in the sight of God, cryeth out against it, terming it adultery, and all worldlings adulterers, because they forsake Christ their true husband, and wholly give their hearts to this world:** O ye adulterers and adulteresses, **saith he**, know ye not that the amity of this world is the enmity of God? whosoever therefore will be made a friend to this world, makes himselfe the enemie of God. **And so he dare stand forth and say, I will bee the enemy of God: who therefore dare bee a worldling: for every worldling is the enemy of God: what then will become of you, O yee wicked worldlings?** James 4.

Phil. It appeareth then plainely by the Scriptures, that the excessive love of this world, and unsatiable desire of having, is a most dangerous thing: and men do they know not what, in seeking so greedily after it.

Theol. **The Heathen man will rise up in judgement against us; for hee saith,** Unsatiableness is the foulest evill Sophocles.

vill among mortall men. But many of our sea-gulfes and whirl-pooles make no conscience of it. They thinke it is no sinne, they devour and swallow up all, and yet are never satisfied. They will have all, and more than all, and the World and all. The whole World cannot satisfie their minde, but God must create new Worlds to content them. These men are sick of the golden dropsie: the more they have, the more they desire. The love of money increaseth, as money it selfe increaseth.

Eccles. 5. 9. But the Scripture saith, He that loveth silver shall not bee satisfied with silver. Oh therefore that wee would strive earnestly to get out of this gulfe of hell,

Apoc. 12. 2. and tread the Moone (that is, all worldly things) under our feet, as it is spoken of the Church: and that wee would set our affections on the things that are above, and not on the things that are beneath: that wee would flee an high pitch, and soare aloft as the Eagles, looking downe at this World, and all things in it, as at our feet, contemning it, and treading the very glory of it under our feet, that it may never have more power over us!

Phil. O happy, and twice happy are they that can do so! and I beseech the Almighty God to give us his holy Spirit, whereby wee may be carried above this

this world, into the mountaines of Spices. For, how happy a thing is it to have our converſation in heaven! that is, to have an inward converſation with God, by much prayer, reading, meditation, and heavenly affections. This indeed is to climbe up above the world, and to converſe in the chambers of peace. O therefore that we could ſeriouſly and throughly conceive and conſider of this world as it is! that wee would well weigh the vanity of it, and the excellency of that which is to come; that ſo wee might loath the one, and love the other; deſpiſe the one, and imbrace the other; love God more then ever wee did, and this world leſſe! For what is this world, but vanity of vanities?

Antil. You do exceedingly abaſe that which ſome make their god. You ſpeak contemptuouſly of that which moſt men have in greateſt price and admiration. You diſgrace that which multitudes would grace. You make light of that which numbers make greateſt account of. Let us therefore heare your reaſons. Shew us more fully what it is; deſcribe it unto us.

Theol. **The world is a ſea of griefe, a pageant of fond delights, a theatre of vanity, a labyrinth of errour, a gulfe of griefe, a ſtye of filthineſſe, a vale of miſery, a ſpectacle of woe, a river of**

teares, a stage of deceit, a cage full of Owles, a den of Scorpions, a Wilderness of wolves, a cabbin of Bears, a whirle-wind of Passions, a faigned Comedy, a detestable phrenzie, where is false delight, assured griefe, certaine sorrow, uncertaine pleasure, lasting woe, fickle wealth, long heavinesse, short joy.

Phil. Now you have indeed described it to the full, and layed it out (as it were) in orient colours. And a man would think he were bewitched or stark mad, which hereafter should set his minde on it. But yet I am desirous to heare a little more of that which I asked you before: wherein the strength and poyson of the world doth especially consist.

Theol. In this lyeth a great strength of the world, that it draweth down the stars of heaven, and maketh them fall to the earth, as it is said of the Dragons taile, which is ambition, covetousnesse, and the love of this world. For we may wonder and lament, to see how the love of these things hath wounded and overborne many excellent servants of God, both Preachers and Professors of the Gospel: which thing doth plainely argue the strength of it. For it is the strongest and the very fall engine that Satan useth to impugne us withall, when

Rev. 12.

when none other will prevaile. For when no temptation could fasten upon Christ, hee bringeth forth this last weapon, which never faileth. All these things will I give thee; shewing him the glory of the whole world. So then he (having experience of this, that it never faileth) thought to have overcome Christ himselfe with it. Here therefore lyeth the very sting and strength of the world and the Divell. For whom hath hee not taken with, All these things will I give thee? whom hath hee not wounded? whom hath hee not deceived? whom hath hee not overthrowne? with this hee inticed Balaam; with this he beguiled Achan; with this he overthrew Judas: with this he bewitched Demas: with this in these our dayes he deceiveth many of excellent gifts. For assuredly hee is a Phœnix amongst men, which is not overcome with this. He is a Wonderment of the world, that is not moved with money. Mat. 4.

Phil. I am now fully satisfied for this matter. But one thing commeth often into my mind; to wit, that these miserable worldlings can have no found comfort in their pleasures and profits; because they have no comfort in God, nor peace in their owne consciences.

Theol. You say very true. It is impossible that men, loving this

worlde, should have any sound comfort in God. For no man can serve two masters, both God and riches. Their case therefore is very dangerous and fearefull, though they never see it, nor feele it: as I will shew you by a plaine example. Put case one of these great rich worldlings should be cloathed in velvet and cloth of gold in most stately manner, and also should be set at his table, furnished with all the dainties of the worlde, should bee attended and waited upon by many in most lordly and pompous manner, should sit in his goodly dining chamber, all glittering like gold, should have his first, second, and third service served in with minstrels and instruments of musick, in most royall sort, hee sitting in his chaire like a King in his throne: yet for all this, if a dagger should bee held to his heart all this whyle, ready to stab him; what pleasure, what joy, what comfort could he have in all the rest? Even so, whatsoever pompe and pleasures wicked worldlings have here below, yet their guilty and hellish conscience is as it were a dagger held alwayes hard to their heart, so as they can have no sound comfort in any thing. Or let mee give it you thus: Put case a man hath committed high treason, and were therefore apprehended, arraigned,

raigned, and condemned to be hanged, drawne and quartered: what then can comfort a man in this case? Can mirth, can musick, can gold, can silver, can lands, can livings? No, no, none of all these can help him, or give him any comfort. For the continuall thoughts of death doe so gripe him at the heart, that none of all these can doe him any good, or any whit mitigate his griefe. What then is the thing that can comfort him in this case? Onely a pardon sealed with the Kings broad seale, and subscribed with his owne hand. For as soone as he hath got this, his heavie heart reviveth, and leaps for joy. This then assuredly is the very case of all prophane Atheists and worldlings, who are not assured of the King of heaben his pardon for their sinne: and then what joy can they have either in their meat, drinke, goods, cattell, wives, children, lands, revenues, or any thing whatsoever? For the dreadfull thoughts of hell doe ere-soones crosse them inwardly, and quite damp and dash all their mirth. Their owne consciences will not bee stilled, but in most terrible manner rise up and give evidence against them, telling them flatly, they shall bee damned, how merry and jocond soeber they seeme to bee in this world, setting a good face on the matter. For sure it

is, that inwardly they have many a cold pull, and many heavie gripes. And all their mirth and jollity, is but a giggling from the teeth outward: they can have no sound comfort within. And therefore the wise King saith, Prov. 14. 13. Even in laughter the heart is sorrowfull: and the end of that mirth is heavinesse. Likewise saith the holy man Job 27. 20. Job, Terrors of conscience come upon the wicked man like waters: in the night a whirle-winde carrieth him away secretly. Eliphas the Temanite Iob 15. 20. avouched the same point, saying, The wicked man is continually as one that travelleth of childe, a sound of fear is in his eares, &c. Thus then we see, that howsoever many carnall Atheists, and ungodly persons seeme outwardly to float aloft in all mirth and jollity, bearing it out (as we say) at the brest: yet inwardly are they pinched with terrors, and most horrible convulsions of conscience.

Antil. You have spoken many things very sharply against covetousnesse: but in my minde, so long as a man covets nothing but his owne, hee cannot bee said to be covetous.

Theol. Yes that he may. For not onely is he covetous, which greedily desireth other mens goods; but even hee also which over-niggardly and pinchingly holdeth fast his owne, and

is

is such a Miser, that hee will part with nothing. Alas see the world is full of such pinch-pennies, that will let nothing goe, except it bee wrung from them perforce, as a key out of Hercules hand.

The gripple muck-rakers had as leeve part with their blood as their goods. They will pinch their owne backes and bellies, to get their god into their chests. And when they have once got him there, will they easily part with him, trow ye? No, no: a man will part with his god for no mans pleasure. Hee will eat pease-bread, and drinke small drinke, rather than he will diskinith his god. Therefore the Scripture saith, Eat not the meat of him that hath an evill eye: and desire not his dainty dishes. For as hee grudgeth his owne soule, so will he say unto thee; Eat and drinke, when his heart is not with thee. Thou shalt vomit thy morsels, which thou hast eaten, and lose thy pleasant speeches. The old saying is, The covetous man wanteth as well that which he hath, as that which he hath not; because he hath no use of that which he hath. So then you see, there is a great strength of covetousnesse in the niggardly keeping of our owne. Prov. 32. 6.

Anil. Yet for all this, men must follow their worldly businesse, & lay up to

liue. For it is an hard world, and goods are not easie to come by. Therefore men must ply their businesse, or else they may go begge and starue.

Theol. **I deny not, but that you may follow the workes of your calling diligently, so it be in the feare of God, and with a good conscience, as I told you before: but this greedinesse and griplenesse God doth condemne, and also this excessiue loue of money.**

Antil. Beleeue me, I know no body that hates it: I cannot see but that all men loue gold and siluer.

Theol. **It is one thing to vse these things, and another thing to loue them, and set our hearts vpon them.**

1 Iohn 2. **For the Scripture saith,** If riches increase, set not your heart vpon them. **Saint** Iohn **also saith,** Loue not this world, nor the things that are in this world. **He saith not, Vse not this world; but, Loue not this world: For vse it wee may: loue it wee may not. Therefore the Apostle saith, that,**

1 Cor. 7. They which vse this world, should bee as though they vsed it not. **where hee alloweth a sober & moderate vse of the things of this life, in the feare of God. we must vse this world for necessities sake, as we vse meat and drink, taking no more of this world then needes must, for feare of surfeiting. The holy Ghost saith,**

Heb. 13. 5. Let your conuersation bee

bee without covetousnesse, and be content with things present. **Happy is that man therefore that is well content with his present estate whatsoever, and carrieth himselfe moderately and comfortably therein.** For the Spirit saith, There is no profit to a man under the Sun, but that he eat and drink, and delight his soule with the profit of his labours. I saw also this, that this is the hand of God. **In which words, the prudent King saith thus much in effect, That this is all the good we can attaine unto in this world, even to take a sober and comfortable use of the things of this life, which God bestoweth upon us. And further hee avoucheth**; That thus to use them aright, and with sound comfort is a very rare gift of God. For, as one saith, He is a wise man that is not grieved for the things which he hath not; but doth rejoce in the things that hee hath, using them to Gods glory, and his own comfort. **So then I conclude this point, and returne to you an answer, thus: That wee may, in sober and godly manner, use gold, silver, and the things of this life: but at no hand to overlove them, or give our hearts unto them.**

Eccl. 2. 27.

Eccl. 18. 19.

Greg. Naz.

Anth. Well: Yet for all this I cannot see, but that these Preachers and Professors, these learned men and precise fellowes,

fellowes, are even as eager of the world, and as covetous as any other.

Theol. Now you shew your venemous spirit against better men than your selfe. And I have a foure-fold answer for you. First, I answer, that although godly men may be somewhat overtaken this way, and ouerspirt a little, yet they break not out so grossly as others. Secondly, if God leave them sometimes to be overcome of the world; yet hee, in his great kindnesse and mercy, turneth it to their good. For thereby he first humbleth them, and afterwards raiseth them up againe. And so all things worke together for good to them that love God. Thirdly, I answer, we must live by rules, and not by examples. For even the best of Gods people have had their wants and weaknesses. Therefore wee may not frame rules to live by out of the infirmities of the most excellent servants of God. Wicked therefore and impious is their allegation, who alledge Davids adultery, Lots drunkennesse, Peters fall, Abrahams slips, Solomons weaknesse, &c. for a shelter and defence of themselves in their sins. Lastly, I answer, that you greatly wound your selfe in your own speech: so far off are you from mending your market any whit thereby. For if

Rom. 8.

Preachers,

Preachers, and other godly men (after many prayers, teares, and much meanes used, cannot escape scot-free, but sometimes are wounded, and almost overthrowne by the World and the Divell: what then shall become of you, which use no meanes at all, nor any paine-striving, but willingly give place to the Divell? If the Divell did ouer-master David, Lot, Samson, Solomon, and other such excellent worthies; alas, what shall become of meere worldlings, and drunkards? If the most valiant men, and chiefe Captaines in a battell goe downe, what shall become of the faint-hearted soulders? And as S. Peter saith, If the righteous scarce be saved, where shall the wicked and ungodly appeare? So then I take you as the rebound, and return no more weapon upon your selfe; That such godly men cannot escape through this World without blowes, what shall become of them that know not what godlinesse meaneth?

1 Pet. 4. 18.

Anvil. Yet I say once again, that men must live, men must lay up for this world: we cannot live by the Scriptures. And as for that which you call covetousnesse, it is but good husbandry.

Theol. I thought wee should have it at last. Now you have paid it home: you are come to the old byas, and as

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a Hare to her old fourm, and her old covert. For this is the very covert and thicket of the world, wherein they would hide covetousnesse: but I will doe what I can to hunt you out of it by the Scriptures.

Prov. 11. 24. First, Solomon saith, He that spareth more than is right, shall surely come to poverty. So then you see, that covetousnes bringeth poverty. Thus therefore I reason: That which bringeth poverty is no good husbandry: but covetousnesse and too much sparing bringeth poverty; therefore it is no good husbandry. The same Solomon saith, He that is given to gaine, troubleth his owne house. That is, the covetous man is an occasion of many evils in his estate and family. From Scripture I doe thus reason: That which troubleth a mans house, is no good husbandry: but covetousnesse troubleth a mans house; therefore it is no good husbandry. Last of all, the old Proverb saith, Covetousnes bringeth nothing home: And therefore it is no good husbandry. For oftentimes we see, that men for covetousnesse of more, lose that which otherwise they might have had. One of the Hesiodus. wise Heathen saith, Evill gaine is as bad as losse. But the covetous man doth seeke after wicked gaine, and therefore seeketh losse; and consequently

quently is no good husband. Another saith, Unjust gaine bringeth forth losse and misery. And therefore it is farre enough off from vertue and all good husbandry. Thus then, I hope, you are so hunted both by God and men, that this covert cannot hide you. And therefore you must out of it, and seeke some other shelter: for this will not serve your turne. Phocilides.

Phil. Now I must needs say, you have fully stopt his mouth, and throughly ferreted him out of his deepe borrow. And it is most certaine that you say, that the wise Heathen hath condemned covetousnesse and all unjust gaines; which we both practice and defend: and therefore shall they rise up in judgement against us. But now let us leave this caviller, and proceed in our matters. There is one thing yet remaining, wherein I desire to be satisfied.

Theol. What is that?

Phil. I would gladly know which bee the speciall remedies against covetousnesse.

Theol. There be two speciall remedies against covetousnesse: to wit, contentation, and the meditation of Gods providence.

Phil. Let us heare somewhat of contentation out of the Scriptures.

Theol. The Apostle saith, Having food and raiment, we must be therewith content. 1 Tim. 7.9

content. For we brought nothing into this world: and it is certaine wee shall carry nothing out. **The Spirit also saith,** Let your conversation bee without covetousnesse, and be content with your present estate. **Againe, the Apostle saith,** He had learned in what estate soever hee was, therewith to bee content. **Note that he saith, Hee had learned: for hee had it not of himselfe. For contentation is the singular gift of God: as it is written,** The righteous eateth to the contentation of his soule but the belly of the wicked shall want. **An ancient Father saith,** Wee ought to accustome our selves to live of a little, and to be content; that wee may doe no wicked or filthy thing for lucres sake. **Another saith,** Hee is not poore that hath nothing, but hee that desires much. Neither is hee rich that hath much, but hee that wanteth nothing: for contentation never wanteth. There is no griefe in lacking, but where there is immoderate desire of having. If we will live after nature, we shall never bee poore: if after our owne appetite, we shall never be rich. **well therefore said the Poet,** Wax not rich unjustly, but justly: Be content with thine own things: abstaine from other mens. **Thus then wee see, that both God himselfe (the fountaine of all wisedome) and men also, both in the state of**

1 Tim. 7.9.

Heb. 13.5.

Phil. 4.

Prov. 13.25.

Cyril. in Ioan. 12.

Chrysost. hom. 51.

Euripides.

of nature and grace, doe all joyntly advise us to strive for contentation: and then wee shall have a soveraigne remedy against Covetousnesse.

Phil. Let us heare somewhat of the second remedy against Covetousnesse.

Theol. An earnest thinking upon the providence of God is a wisers remedy against the most sordid and pining carefulnesse of men for this life. For if we would seriously weigh, and deeply consider the provident care that God hath had for his children in all ages, touching food and rayment: and how strangely hee hath provided for them; it might suffice to correct this evill in us, and minister unto us a notable preservative against Covetousnesse.

we read how wonderfully the Lord did provide for his Prophet Elias, in the time of the great dearth and drought that was in Israel? Did not the Lord command the Ravens to feed him by the River Cherith? Did not the Ravens bring him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening, and hee drank of the River? 1 King. 17.

what should I speak how miraculously God provided for Hagar and her Infant, when they were both cast out of Abrahams house, and brought to great extremity; even both Gen. 21.15.

of

of them ready to give up the Ghost for want of food?

Did not God helpe at a pinch, as his manner hath alwayes beene? Did he not send his Angel unto them, and both comfort them, and provide for them? what should I speake how strangely God provided for his Church in the wildernesse? Did he not feed them with Manna from heaven, and gave them water to drinke out of the Rock? Hath not our heavenly Father made many royall and large promises, that hee will provide necessaries for his children? Shall we not thinke that he will be as good as his word? Doth he not say, The Lions lack and suffer hunger: but they that seeke him, shall want nothing that is good? Doth he not say, Feare him all yee his Saints, for nothing is wanting to them that feare him? Doth hee not say, No good thing shall bee withheld from them that walke uprightly? Doth he not say, Our heavenly Father knoweth that wee have need of these things, and that all these things shall be cast upon us, if wee earnestly seeke his kingdome? Did hee not bid us, Cast all our care upon him: for hee careth for us? Doth hee not bid us, Take no thought what we shall eat, or what we shall drinke, or wherewith we shall be cloathed? Meaning thereby, no

Exod. 15. 3.

Exod. 17. 6.

Psal. 78.

Psal. 34. 10.

Psal. 84. 12.

Mat. 6. 33.

1 Pet. 5. 7.

Luk 12.

distracting

distracting or distrustfull thoughts. Doth he not say, He will not leave us, nor forsake us? Heb. 13. 5. Doth he not say, The Lord is at hand, in nothing be carefull? Phil. 4. 5. Are not these large promises sufficient to stay up our faith in Gods providence? shall wee thinke God jealleth with us? shall we thinke he meaneth no such matter? shall we imagine hee will not keepe touch? Oh, it were blasphemie once to think it. For God is true, and all men lyars. He is faithfull that hath promised. His word is more than the faith of a Prince; more than ten thousand obligations. Why then doe wee not rest upon it? why goe wee any further? why doe wee not take his word? why doe we not depend wholly upon him? why are wee still covetous? why are wee still distrustfull? why do wee dissemble and deceive? Oh wee of little faith! Our Lord Jesus knowing right well the distrustfulnesse of our nature, and the deep root it hath in us, is not only content to make these great and royall promises unto us which were enough, but also strengtheneth and backeth us with many strong reasons to support our weaknesse in this behalfe. He therefore bringeth us back to a due consideration of things. Consider (saith he) the Ravens: consider the fowles of the heavens: for they Luk 12.

neither

neither ſow nor reap, nor carry into barnes, and yet God feedeth them; **they want nothing.** Conſider the Lillies how they grow; they neither labour nor ſpinne, yet Solomon in all his royalty, was not cloathed like one of theſe. **Oh therefore that we would conſider theſe Conſiders! Oh that we would conſider that our life is more worth than meat, and our bodies than rayment! Oh that we would conſider, that with all our carking and caring we can doe no good at all, no not ſo much as adde one cubite to our ſtature! Truly, truly, if we would deeply ponder theſe reaſons of our Saviour, and apply them to our ſelves, they might ſerve for a bulwarke and ſure defence againſt covetouſneſſe. If men would conſider how that great King of heaven (who hath his way in the whirle-wind, and the clouds are the duſt of his feet) careth for the little wren and ſilly Sparrow, how he looketh to them, how hee tendreth them, how he provideth for them every day both breake-faſt, dinner, and ſupper: it might ſerve to correct our diſtruſtfulneſſe. For who ever ſaw theſe, or any other fowle ſtarve for hunger? ſo good a Father, and ſo good a Nurſe have they. And are not we much better than they? hath not God more care of us, than of them? Yes verily,**

Nah. 1. 3.

8.

a thousand times, for he loveth them but for our sakes: how much more then doth he love ourselves? Therefore I say againe, and againe, If we would consider these things, and lay them to heart, they would nip covetousnesse on the head, and drive it quite out of our hearts. Let us consider therefore, that God provided for man before man was: then how much more will hee provide for man now that hee is? Is hee our Father, and will he not provide for us? Is he our King, and will he not regard us? Is he our shepheard, and will he not look to us? Hath hee provided Heaven for us, and will hee not give us earth? Hath he given us his Sonne Christ, and shall hee not with him give us all things? Doth he provide for his enemies, and will hee not provide for his friends? Doth hee provide for whoremongers, and will hee neglect his chosen? Doth hee send his raine, and cause the Sunne to shine upon the unjust, and shall hee not upon the just? Doth he provide for them which are not of the family, and will hee not provide for his owne family? Will a man feed his Hogges, and not care for his servants? Or will he care for his servants, and not regard his own children? Oh, then let us consider these reasons; let us remember, that our

our heavenly Father hath as great care for the preservation of his creatures, as once he had for their creation. Let us therefore remember, that he which giveth the day, will provide for us the things of the day. Let us remember, that God always giveth for sustentation, though not for satietie. Let us remember, that God will not famish the soules of the righteous. Let us remember how God never faileth his. For who ever trusted in the Lord, and was confounded?

Prov. 10. 38.

Phil. What then is the cause that many do want these outward things?

Theol. The cause is in themselves, because they want faith. For if wee had faith, wee could want nothing For faith feareth no famine, as saith an ancient Father. Another saith, For as much as all things are Gods, he that hath God, can want nothing, if himselfe bee not wanting unto God. Therefore to have God, is to have all things: for if we have him our friend, we have enough, wee need goe no further. For hee will make men our friends: yea, hee will make Angels and all creatures to bee serviceable unto us, hee will give them speciall charge to looke to us, to guard us, and to doe continuall homage unto us. Therefore let us make God our friend, and then have wee done all at once,

Hieron. ad Heliodorum. Cyprian. in oratione dominica.

once; that may concerne our good, both for this life and a better. But if hee stand not our friend, if wee have not him on our side, if he back us not, then all other things whatsoever, can doe us no good: all is not worth a button. For, *Quid prodest si omnia habes, cum tamen, qui omnia dedit, non habeas?* What is a man the better, though hee have all things, and bee without him which is the author of all things, August.

Phil. Herein you speak very truly, no doubt. For wee see many have great plenty of outward things; but because they have not God, they can have no true comfort in them, or blessing with them.

Theol. True indeed: For, Man liveth not by bread only (saith our Lord Jesus) but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. And again he saith, Though a man have abundance, yet his life consisteth not in the things that hee hath. For without Gods blessing there can bee no sound comfort in any thing, wee see, by daily experience, how the Lord curseth the wicked, though they have abundance. For some having abundance, yet are visited with continuall sicknesses. Some having abundance, pine away with consumptions. Others having abundance, dye of surfeiting. Others are snatched away by Mat. 4. Luk. 12.

by untimely death in the midst of all their iollitie. Others are visited with great losse both by sea and by land. Others are bereft with cruell sorrow and disobedient children. Some againe commit murthers, and treasons, and so lose all at once. Others are wasted and consumed by the secret curse of God, no man knoweth how. Some having great riches, are given over to the murtherer, some to the theefe, some to the poysoner. Therefore the wise King saith, There is an evill sickenesse under the Sunne: riches reserved to the owners thereof, for their evill, Eccles. 5. 12.

Iob 20. 23. Zophar also the Naamathite saith, When the wicked shall have sufficient and enough, hee shall bee brought into straits: The hand of every trouble shall meet shall be upon him. When hee shall fill his belly, God will send upon him his fierce wrath; which hee shall raine upon him in stead of his meat.

Thus then is it cleere, that mans life and good estate dependeth not upon the abundance of outward things, but only upon the blessing and providence of God. For, his blessing onely Prov. 10. 22. maketh rich, and it doth bring no sorrow with it. Psal. 37. 16. For, better is a little to the just, than great abundance to many of the wicked. Better is a little with Prov. 15. 16. the feare of the Lord than great treasure,

sure, and trouble therewith. Better is a little with righteousnesse, then great revenues without equity. Prov. 16. 8.

Thus then I conclude this point; Man liveth not by bread, but by a blessing on bread: not by outward meanes, but by a blessing upon meanes. For how can bread, being a dead thing, and having no life in it selfe, give life to others?

Phil. I doe not well understand the meaning of these words, By every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Theol. Thereby is meant the decree, ordinance, and providence of God, which upholdeth all things, even the whole order of nature.

For the Scripture saith, He spake, and it was done: hee commanded, and they were created. In which words wee plainely see, that God doth but speake, and it is done; hee doth command, and all creatures are preserved. For God doth all things with a word. Hee created all with his word: hee preserveth all with his word: hee speaketh, and it is done. His words are words of power and authority. Whatsoever he saith, whatsoever hee willeth for, it must be done presently, without any delay: there is no withstanding of him. Hee saith for famine, and behold famine. He saith Psal. 33. 9.

Gen. 1. 20. leth for plenty, and behold plenty. He calleth for pestilence, and behold pestilence. He calleth for the sword, and behold the sword. All Angels, all men, all beasts, all fishes, all fowles, all creatures whatsoever must obey him, and be at his beck. He is the greatest commander: his word commandeth heaven and earth, and the sea. All creatures must be obedient to his will, and subject to his ordinance.

This is the cause why all things, both in heaven, earth, and the sea, doe keep their immutable and unvariable courses, times and seasons, even because he hath charged them so to doe. And they must of necessity alwayes, at all times, and for ever obey; for the creatures must obey the Creator. This act of Parliament was made the first week of the world, and never since was or can be repealed.

Phil. But to call you back againe to the point we had in hand: Resolve me, I pray you, of this; whether many of the deare children of God doe not, in this life, sometimes want outward things, and are brought into great distresse?

1 King. 17. *Theol.* Yes certainly. For Eliah did want, and was in distresse. Paul did 2 Cor. 1. 8. 2 Cor. 11. 25 want, and was in many distresses. The holy Christians mentioned in the Hebrewes, did want, and were Heb. 11. 36. in

in marvellous distresses. Many of Gods deare ones have in all ages wanted, and at this day also doe want, and are greatly distressed. But this is a most infallible truth, that howsoever Gods children may want, and bee low brought, yet they are neuer vtterly forsaken, but are holpen euen in greatest extremities: yea, when all things are desperate, and brought euen to the last cast.

To this point, most notably speaketh the Apostle, saying, We are afflicted on every side, but yet we despaire not: we are persecuted, but not forsaken; cast downe, but wee perish not. The Prophet Jeremie also saith, The Lord will not forsake for ever: but though hee send affliction, yet will he have compassion, according to the multitude of his mercies: For hee doth not punish willingly, or from his heart, nor afflict the children of men. The Kingly Prophet saith, Surely the Lord will not faile his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance. The Lord himselfe saith, For a moment in mine anger I hid my face from thee; but with everlasting mercy have I had compassion on thee. So then wee may fully assure our selves, and euen write of it (as a most undoubted and sealed truth) that Gods children shall neuer be vtterly forsaken in their troubles.

2 Cor. 4. 8.

Lam. 3.

Psal. 94. 4.

Isa. 55. 8.

Phil. Sith the care and providence of God is so great for his children, as you have largely declared: what then, I pray you, is the cause why God suffereth his to bee brought into so many troubles and necessities?

Theol. Their profit and benefit is the cause, and not their hurt. For he loveth them. When hee smiteth them. Hee favoureth them, when he seemeth to bee most against them. Hee aimeth at their good, when hee seemeth to be most angry with them. Hee woundeth them, that hee may heale them. Hee presseth them, that hee may ease them. Hee maketh them cry, that afterward they may laugh. He alwayes meaneth well unto them, hee never meaneth hurt. Hee is most constant in his love towards them. If he bring them into necessities, it is but for the tryall of their faith, love, patience, and diligence in prayer.

If he cast them into the fire it is not to consume them; but to purge and refine them. If hee bring them into great dangers, it is but to make them call upon him more earnestly for help and deliverance.

He presseth us, that we might cry: wee cry, that wee may be heard: wee are heard, that we might be delivered. So that here is no hurt done: wee are worse feared than hurt.

Even

Even as a mother, when her child is way-ward, threatneth to throw it to the woolfe, or scareth it with some poker, or bul-begger, to make it cling more unto her, and be quiet: So the Lord oftentimes sheweth us the terrible faces of troubles and dangers, to make us cleave and cling faster unto him, and also to teach us to esteeme better of his gifts when wee enjoy them, and to bee more thankfull for them; as health, wealth peace, liberty, safety, &c. So then still wee see, here is nothing meant on Gods part but good: as it is written: All things work together for good to them that love God. For, even the afflictions of Gods children are so sanctified unto them by the Spirit, that thereby they are made partakers of the holinesse of God. Thereby they enjoy the quiet fruit of righteousnesse. Thereby they attaine unto a greater measure of joy in the holy Ghost. Thereby the world is crucified to them, and they to the world. Thereby they are made conformable to the death of Christ. Thereby they are kept from the condemnation of the world. Thereby they learne experience, patience, hope, &c. So that all things considered, Gods children are no losers by their afflictions, but gainers. It is better for them to have them, then to be without them:

Rom. 8.

Heb. 12. 10.
Heb. 12. 14.

1 Thes. 1. 6.

Gal. 6. 14.
Phil. 3. 10.

2 Cor. 1. 32.

Rom. 5. 3. 4.

they are very good for them. For when Gods children are chastised, it is as it should be. For to them the crosse is mercy, and losse is gaine. Affliction are their schooling, and their Adversitie their best Universitie.

Psal. 118. It is good for me (saith the holy man of God) that I have been afflicted, that I might learne thy statutes. By his afflictions therefore hee learned much, and became a good scholler in Gods booke, and well seene in his Statutes and Lawes. Hee grew to great wisedome and judgement by his chastisements. All things turned about, in Gods mercifull providence, to his everlasting comfort. For I say againe and againe, That all things tend to the good of Gods chosen people. And therefore that estate which God will have his children to be in, is always best for them: because he who can best discerne what is best, seeth it to be best for them: whether it bee sicknesse or health; poverty or plenty, prison or liberty; prosperity or adversity. For sometimes sicknesse is better for us than health, and poverty than plenty. Are therefore the children of God sick? It is best for them. Are they poore? It is best for them. Are they in any trouble? It is best for them: because their good Father will turne it to the best. Hee will oftentimes cut

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us short of our lusts and desires, because he seeth we will bane our selves with them. He, in fatherly care, will take the knife from us, because hee seeth wee will hurt our selves with it. Hee will keepe us short of health, and wealth, because he knoweth wee will bee the worse for them. Hee will not give us too much ease and prosperity in this world: for hee knoweth it will poyson us. He will not allow us continuall rest, like standing ponds: for then hee knoweth wee will gather scum and filth. Hee dealeth fatherly and mercifully with us in all things; even then seeking our greatest good, when wee thinke hee doth us most harme.

And to speak all in a word; he bringeth us into troubles and straits, to this end especially, that he may heare of us. For he right well knoweth our nature, he is well acquainted with our disposition. He knoweth we will not come at him, but when wes stand in need of him: wee care not for him, so long as all goeth well with us. But if wee come into distresse, or want any thing that we faine would have, then hee is sure to heare of us: as hee saith by the Prophet; In their affliction they will seeke me early. Hos. 5. 15.

And another Prophet saith, Lord, in trouble have they visited thee: They Isa. 26. 16.

poured out a prayer when thy chastisement was upon them. **So then now, I hope, you do plainely see the cause, why the Lord bringeth his children into so many troubles and miseries.**

Phil. I do see it indeed, and am very well satisfied in it. But yet let me aske you one thing further: Are Gods children alwayes sure to be delivered out of their troubles?

Theol. **Yea verily: and (out of doubt) so farre forth as God seeth good for them. For it is written,** Great are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. Psal. 34. 19.

S. Peter **saith,** The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation. 2 Pet. 1. 9. **As if he should say, hee is beaten to it, and well learne and experienced in it, so as he can doe it easily, and without any trouble at all. It is said of Joseph being in prison,** That when his appointed time was come, and the counsell of the Lord had tryed him, the King sent and loosed him, the ruler of the people delivered him. Psal. 105. 19, 20. **And againe the Scripture saith,** The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth them; and delivereth them out of all their troubles. The Angell of the Lord tarrieth round about them that feare him, and delivereth them. Psal. 34. **And in another place, the Lord himselfe saith, concerning the righteous man,** Because hee hath loved

me,

mee, therefore I will deliver him. I will exalt him, because he hath knowne my name. He shall call upon me in trouble, and I will heare him. I will be with him in trouble: I will deliver him, and glorifie him. **So also saith** Eliphas **the** Temanite, He shall deliver thee in six troubles, and in the seventh the evill shall not touch thee. Come my people, **saith the Lord**, enter thou into my Chambers, and shut the doores after thee: hide thy selfe for a very little while, untill the indignation passe over. **And the Prophet saith**, Upon mount Sion shall be deliverance, and it shall be holy: and the house of Jacob shall possesse their hereditarie possessions. **Almost innumerable places of the Scriptures might be alledged to this purpose; but these may suffice. Therefore let us know for a certainty, that so sure as trouble and affliction are to the children of God: so sure also is deliverance out of the same. As we may write of the one, and make reckoning of it, as sure as the coat on our backe: so may wee also in Gods good time, write of the other, and make full account of it, as sure as the Lord is true.** Abraham **was in trouble, but delivered.** Job **in trouble, but delivered.** David **in great trouble, but delivered. The three children in the furnace, but delivered.** Daniel **in the**

Iob.5.

Isa.26.20.

Obad.17.

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Psal. 91. 17.

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Lions den, but delivered. Jonas in the whales belly, but delivered. Paul in innumerable troubles, but yet delivered out of all.

Phil. All this being true that you say, it followeth, that Gods children are chastised only for their good, and evermore sure of deliverance in his appointed time. Which thing being so, mee thinks there is no cause at all why they should be over-heavie, or too much cast downe in their afflictions.

Theol. **Assuredly there is no cause at all, but rather cause why they should rejoyce, clap their hands, and sing. Care away. For can a father forsake his children? a King his subjects? a Master his servant? or a Shepheard his sheep? Doth not** Iehovah **say, I will not leave thee nor forsake thee? Doth not our heavenly Father know wee have need of these things? Hath not God given us his word, that we shall not want outward things? Hath he not said, they shall be cast upon us? why then should wee bee dismayed? why should we hang downe our heads? Why doe wee not plucke up good hearts, and be of good cheere? God is our deare Father: hee is our best friend: hee is our daily Benefactor: he keepeth us at his owne cost and charges: he grudgeth us nothing: he thinketh nothing too much for us:**

Heb. 13.

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hee loveth us most dearely: he is most charie and tender over us: hee cannot endure the winde should blow upon us: hee will have us want nothing that is good for us. If we will eat gold, we shall have it. He hath given us his faithfull promise, that as long as we live, we shall never want. Let us therefore rejoyce and be merry. For heaven is ours, earth is ours, God is ours, Christ is ours, All is ours: As the Apostle saith, All is yours, and you are Christs, and Christ is Gods. The world clap their hands, and crow long before it be day, saying, All is theirs: but the children of God may say, and say truly, All is ours. For they have a true title and proper interest, through Christ, in all the creatures. Many are their priviledges, great are their prerogatives. They are free of heaven and free of earth. They are the onely free Denizens of the world: Christ hath purchased them their freedome: Christ hath made them free, and therefore they are free indeed. They are free from sinne, free from hell, free from damnation. They are at peace with God, Men and Angels. They are at peace with themselves. They are at peace with all Creatures. They are young Princes, Angels fellowes, descended of the highest house, of the blood

1 Cor. 3. 21.

blood royall of Heaven, States of Paradise, and heires apparent to the immortall Crowne. Therefore God hath commanded his Angels to guard them, being such young Princes as they are: yea, hee hath given a very strait charge to all his Creatures, to looke to them, to see to them, that they sustaine nothing, that they take no hurt: so jealous, so chary, so tender is he of them. The Angels must comfort Jacob. The whale must rescue Jonas. The Raven must feed Elias. The Sun and Moone must stay for Joshua. The Sea must divide it selfe, that Moses and his people may passe thorow. The fire must not burne the three Children. The Lions may not devoure Daniel. All the creatures must change their nature, rather than Gods children should not be holpen and delivered. Oh therefore how great is the happinesse of Gods chosen! who can expresse it? who can utter it? They know not their owne happinesse: it is hid from them. Afflictions do cloud it: troubles do ever shadow it: crosses do dim it: and there is an interposition of the earth betwixt their sight and it. But this is most certaine and sure, that the best is behinde with the children of God: all the sweet is to come. Their happinesse doth not appeare in this world. Their life is

Gen. 3.2. Ionah. 2. 1 King. 17. Ios. 10. Exod. 14. Dan. 3 & 6. 1 Iohn 3.2.

hid

hid with Christ in God. When Christ shall appeare, then shall they also appeare with him in glory. It doth not yet appeare what they shall bee, but when he commeth, they shall be made like unto him. **Their names are already taken, and entred into the booke of life: and one day they shall bee crowned. One day it shall bee said unto them,** Come yee blessed, &c. **One day they shall enjoy his presence,** where is fulnes of joy, and at whose right hand there is pleasure for evermore. **Therefore let all Gods secret ones rejoyce, sing, and be merry. For howsoever in this world they be contemned, trodden under the foot, made no-bodies, and walk as shadowes; being counted as the very rags of the earth, and the abjects of the world: yet the time will come, when their happinesse and felicity shall bee such as never entred into the heart of man: it is endlesse, unspeakable, and unconceiveable.**

Col. 3. 3, 4.

Psal. 16.

Phil. I do now plainly see, that there is no cause why Gods people should bee too heavie and dumpish in their afflictions. I see that though they be not free from all afflictions, yet are they free from all hurtfull afflictions. For no rod, no crosse, no chastisement is hurtfull unto them, but all, in the conclusion, commeth to a blessed issue.

Theol. **You have uttered a great,** and

and a moſt certaine truth. For there is no affliction or tryall, which God impoſeth upon his children, but if they endure it quietly, truſt in his mercy firmely, and tarry his good pleaſure obediently, it hath a bleſſed and a comfortable end. Therefore the people of God may well bee merry in the midſt of their ſorrowes. They may with patience and comfort ſubmit themſelves to their Fathers corrections, taking them patiently, and even kiſſing his holy rod, and ſaying in themſelves; With my Father will have it ſo, I am content; ſeeing it is his minde, I am willing withall. As old Ely ſaid, It is the Lord, let him do what he will. And as David in like ſubmiſſion, ſaid in a certaine caſe, Behold here am I: let him doe to mee as it ſeemeth good in his owne eyes. And againe he ſaith, I was dumbe, and opened not my mouth: becauſe thou Lord haſt done it. Behold here then the patience of Gods Saints, and their humble ſubmiſſion unto his moſt holy will. They know all ſhall end well, and that maketh them glad to thinke of it. I conclude then, that the children of God are happy, in what ſtate ſoever they are: happy in trouble, happy out of trouble; happy in poverty, happy in plenty; bleſſed in ſickneſſe, bleſſed in health; bleſſed at home likewiſe, and abroad;

1 Sam. 3. 18.

2 Sam. 15. 26

Pſal. 39.

Deut. 28.

and,

and every way blessed. But on the contrary, the wicked are cursed, in what state soever they are: cursed in sickness, cursed in health; cursed in plenty, cursed in poverty; cursed in prosperity, cursed in adversity; cursed in honour, cursed in dishonour. For all things work together for their destruction. Nothing doth them any good. They are not any thing the better, either for Gods mercies or judgements. All weathers are alike unto them. They are alwayes the same, in prosperity and adversity: they are no changelings. And, as we say, A good yeere doth not mend them, nor an ill yeere paire them.

Phil. You have long insisted upon this point. Now proceed to the fourth signe of a mans damnation, which is the contempt of the Gospel: and lay open both the greatnesse of the sinne, and the danger of it.

Theol. This sinne is of another nature than the former. It is a sinne against the first Table. It toucheth the person of God himselfe. For to contemne the Gospel, it is to contemne God himselfe, whose Gospel it is. If to contemne the Ministers of the Gospel, be to contemne God and Christ (as our Lord Jesus aboucheth) how much more then, to contemne the Gospel it selfe? Therefore it is dan-

Luke 10.10

gerous

gerous meddling with this sinne. It is to meddle with edged tooles, to meddle with Princes matters, to touch the Ark, to come neere the holy mountaine, which all were things full of great perill and danger. Yea, it is to spill the Sacrament. It is Noli me tangere, It is to raile at a King. It is to spet God in the face. It is high treason against the King of glory. Therefore this sin, of all other, can neuer be endured, and may at no hand be borne withall. For can a mortall King endure the contempt of his lawes? Can he put up the contempt of his own person? Can he abide any to spet at his Scepter, or to throw a stone at it? No surely, hee will not. Therefore the holy Ghost saith, Hee that despiseth Moses lawes, dieth without mercy, under two or three witnesse. Of how much sorer punishment suppose yee shall he be worthy, which treadeth under foot the Sonne of God, and counteth the bloud of the testament as an unholy thing (wherewith he was sanctified), and doth despite the Spirit of Grace? And againe, If they were punished which obeyed not the word spoken by Angels; how shall we escape, if wee neglect so great salvation? if they escaped not, which refused him that spake on earth, how shall wee escape if wee turne away from him that

Heb.10.28.

Heb.2.3.

Heb.12.

speaketh

speaketh from heaven? **Therefore our Saviour Christ saith, That** it shall be easier for Sodom in the day of judgment, than for the contemners of the Gospel. Luke 10.12.

Moreover hee saith, The Queene of the South shall rise up in judgement against all froward despisers of his word, Mat.12. For she came from the uttermost parts of the earth; to heare the wisdom of Solomon; and behold a greater than Solomon is here. **For** Christ **is greater than** Solomon; **his doctrine and wisedome far more excellent. And therefore their sinne is the greater which contemne it, They shall never be able to answer it. For the Spirit saith,** Hee that despiseth the word shall bee destroyed. Prov.13.13. **S.** Peter **also telleth us, that the old world, and men of the first age, are now in hell fire, because they both despised, and were disobedient to the doctrine of Christ,** which (**though not personally yet in his divine Spirit**) he spake by Noah. 1 Pet.3.9. 1 Pet.3.20. **So then we see cleerely, God will never take it at our hands, that his glorious Gospel should bee so universally and openly contemned as it is.**

Phil. You have spoken most truly, and also shewed it out of the Scriptures, that the contempt of the Gospel is a most hainous sin: yet for all that, it is most lamentable to consider, how little men esteeme it, and how light they make of it.

it. Many regard it no more then an egge-shell, they thinke it not worth a galley halfe-penny: they will not goe to the doore to heare it; they take it to bee a breath from us, and a sound to them, and so the matter is ended. They esteem it but as a noise, or empty sound in the aire; or as a voyce a farre off, which a man understandeth not: they never felt the power of it in their hearts. Therefore they preferre their sheep, their farmes, their oxen, their profits, their pleasures, yea every thing before it; they know it not to bee any such precious jewell, as it is. Although our Lord Jesus himselfe compare it to a hid treasure, and a most precious pearle, yet these filthy swine of the world tread it under feet: for they know not the price of it. Though Solomon the wise saith, All the merchandise of gold and silver, pearle and precious stones, are not to bee compared to it: yet these beasts, these dogs and hogs of the world, contemne it: They esteeme a cow more than Christs most glorious Gospel. They are like Esops cocke, which made more account of a barley corne, than all the precious stones in the world: they are like little children, that esteeme their rattle more than a bag of gold; they are like the Gadarens, which esteemed their hogs more than Christ and his Gospel: they

Prov. 3.

make

make nothing of it: they thinke it not worth the while. Many of them sit idle in the streets, even upon the Sabbaths: while the Gospel is preached in their Churches, many are at cards and tables in the Ale-houses. Many on the Sabbath sleep upon their beds all the Sermon while in the afternoone. Many will hear a Sermon in the forenoone, and they take that to be as much as God can require at there hands, and that he is somewhat beholden to them for it; but as for the afternoone, they will heare none: then they will to bowles or tables. These men serve God in the forenoone, and the divell in the afternoon. Some run after whores and harlots on the Sabbath, some run to dancing and bear-baitings, some sit upon their stalls, some sit in their shops, some by the fire side, some sit idle in the streets, some go to the stole-ball, and others looke on. O miserable wretches! O cursed caitiffes! O monstrous hell-hounds, which so grosly and openly contemn the Gospel of Christ! What will become of them in the end? Assuredly their damnation sleepeth not. A thousand deaths wait for them: they lye open on all sides to the wrath of God. And we may wonder at his marvellous patience, that hee doth not throw downe balls of wilde-fire from heaven, to consume and burne up both them, their shops and houses, and

and even make them spectacles of his vengeance, for so notorious contempt of such sacred, holy, and high things.

Theol. **You have spoken very truly, zealously, and religiously, and I doe greatly commend you for it. And I must needs affirme the same things, for they cannot be denyed. And for mine owne part, I think the Gospel was never so openly contemned in any age (of a people living under the profession of it, and under a godly and Christian Prince) as it is in this age. For howsoever some make a shew of religion, yet they have denyed the power thereof. They turne the grace of God into wantonnesse, as S. Jude** Iude 4. **saith. They make the Gospel a cloak for their sins. They receive it, and embrace it, as it will best stand with their profits and pleasures, their lusts and likings, their credits and policies, and not a jot further. They will practise it at their leisure.** Tit. 1. 16. These men professe they know God: but by their works they deny him, and are abominable, disobedient, and to every good work reprobate. **This age is full of such carnall Protestants.**

Phil. This age indeed aboundeth with many hollow-hearted hypocrites, dissemblers, and time-servers; which howsoever they make a face and bear a countenance as though they loved the Gospel,

pel, yet their heart is not with it. Their heart is with Atheism, their heart is with Popery; they have a Pope in their belly: they be Church-papists. Howsoever now and then they come to the Church, and heare a Sermon, and shew a good countenance to the Preacher, yet their heart goeth after covetousnes. The Lord complaineth of this by the Prophet, saying; This people will sit before thee, and heare thy words: but they will not do them. For with their mouthes they make jests: and their heart goes after covetousnes. God complaineth of this also by the Prophet Jeremie, saying; Will you steal, murder, and commit adultery, and sweare falsly, and stand before me in this house wherupon my name is called, and say, We are delivered, though we have done all these abominations? Is this house become a den of theeves, whereupon my name is called? Where we see how the Lord doth chide his people, and sharply reprove them for abusing of his temple, worship, and sacrifices, making them a cloak for their sinnes: and making his house a den of theeves, which should be an assembly of Saints. Now all this is a lively description of our time, wherein many use the exercises of the word, prayer, and sacraments, not to kill and mortifie sin, but to nourish and shelter their sins. For they blindly imagine, that

Ezek. 33. 32.

Ier. 7. 9.

if

if they come to the Church and pray, and heare the Sermon, they are discharged of their sins, though they leave them not. They imagine they have given God his full due; and that therefore they may be the more bold to sin afterward. These kind of hypocrites are like rogues, which use medicines, not to cure sores, but to make sores. These are like the Papist, which thinke if they heare Masse in the Morning, they may doe what they list all the day after.

Theol. **I see now you have very well profited in the knowledge of God and true Religion. You have spoken soundly, and like a man of knowledge in Gods matters. For the common sort of people thinke indeed, that all Religion consisteth in the outward service of God, though their hearts be farre from him. To whom** Mat. 15. 8. **God may justly say,** This people draweth neere me with their lips, but their hearts are farre from me. **Of whom also God may justly take up all his just complaints of his people** Israel **and** Judah, **which are so frequent in all the Prophets: to wit, That hee did abhorre their sacrifices, loath their** Esa. 66. 3. **oblations, detest their incense, despise their new Moones, disdaine their rams, lams, and goats; accounting them all but as mans blood, dogs blood, swines blood; and all because their**

their hands were full of bloud; because they executed not justice and judgement in the gate; because they were not obedient to his will; because their hearts were not with him; because they used, or rather abused, all these things as shelters for their sinnes.

Phil. The great contempt of the Ministers of the Gospel in this age, doth strongly argue the contempt of the Gospel it selfe. For a man cannot love the Gospel, and hate the faithfull Ministers thereof. But wee see by lamentable experience that the most grave, godly, and learned Ministers, are had in derision of very base and vile persons. And, as Job saith, They whose fathers I have refused to set with the dogs of my flocks, they were the children of fooles, and the children of villaines, which were more vile than the earth. For now every rascall dares scoffe and scorne at the most grave and ancient Fathers and Pastors of the Church, dares flout them as they walke in the streets, and as they ride by the high wayes. And though the holy Ghost giveth them glorious and loftie titles (as the Stewards of Gods owne house, disposers of his secrets, disbursers of his treasure, keepers of the broad seal, keepers of the keys of heaven, Gods Secretaries, Gods Ambassadors, Angels; yea the very glory of Christ: and all this

Tit. 1. 7. 1 Cor. 4. 1. Mat. 16. 19. 2 Cor. 5. 20. Rev. 3. 7, 24. 2 Cor. 8. 2.

this, to expresse the excellency of their calling) yet these vile varlets, and venemous vermine of the earth, dare call them proud Prelats, pild Parsons, pelting Priests. O monstrous and intolerable impiety! Now it is come to passe that this most sacred function (which is glorious in the sight of God and his Angels, and in it selfe most honourable) is had in greatest contempt of all callings. For now the earth is full of rank Atheists, and mock-Gods, which scoffe at the Gospel, & bleat out their tongues at all religion. These kinde of followers never dissemble for the matter, they make no shew at all, they are no hypocrites, they hide not their sins, but declare them openly like Sodom. They care not if they never come to the Church; they are too full of it. They live like brute beasts. They thinke the Scriptures are but fables. They raile at the Ministers & Preachers. They make flat opposition against them, and are notorious mockers and past-graces.

Theol. **Of such, the Apostle S. Peter foretold, that** in the last dayes should come mockers, and such as would live after their owne lusts, &c. **Of such a godly writer saith,** *Verbum Dei securè contemnitur, promissiones inanes esse creduntur, minæ pro fabulis habentur.* **That is,** The word of God is carelesly contemned, his promises are counted

ed vaine, and idle devisings fables. Of such the Poet sayd,

Heu! vivunt homines tanquam mors nulla sequatur,
aut velut infernis fabula vana foret

Alas! men live as they should never die,
Or as though speech of hell were a starke lie.

Now is also the time, wherein the world swarmeth with Papists and Atheists: and most men live as if there were no God. For now Religion is hated, true godlinesse despised, staie abhorred, sincerity scoffed at, uprightnesse loathed, Preachers contemned, Professors disdained, and almost all good men had in derision. For now we may justly complaine with the Prophet, Judgement is turned backward, and justice standeth a farre off. Truth is fallne in the streets, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth and he that refraineth from evill, maketh himself a prey. The Prophet Micah bewaileth the times, saying, The good man is perished out of the earth, and there is none righteous among men. They all lye in wait for bloud: every man hunteth his neighbour with a net. The Prophet Jeremy complaineth of the same evill in his time; namely, that the people were come to be

Isa. 59. 14.

Mich. 7. 2.

past shame in sinning; Were they a-
Ier.8.12. shamed (saith he) when they had com-
mitted abomination? Nay, they were
not ashamed, neither could they have
any shame. This is a lively picture,
and a very counterpane of our time:
for now wee have put on a brow of
brasse: wee are become impudent in
sinne. We cannot blush, we cannot be
ashamed. Wee are almost past shame
and past grace. O Lord, what will
this geere grow to in the end!

Phil. We may justly feare some great judgement of God to be neere unto us; yea, even to hang over our heads. For the Lord will never leave the contempt of his Gospel and his Ministery unpunished.

Theol. You have spoken a truth. And wee have heard before how the old world was plagued for it. And wee read how grieuously the Iewes were afflicted by the Romans for this sinne: as our Lord Iesus did plainely foretell. We read also, that after the Lord had preached the Gospel himselfe, and spread it abroad by
Rev.6.2. his Apostles, conquering the world thereby (which thing was signified by the white horse, his rider, his bow, and his crowne) and yet shortly after, saw that the same began to be contemned in the world, and made light of; then hee did in most fearfull manner

plague

plague the earth with warres, bloudshedding, tumults, dearth, famine, and pestilence: which are all signified by the red horse, the black horse, and the pale horse, which did appeare at the opening of the second, third, and fourth seale. So likewise undoubtedly, God will severely punish all injuries, wrongs, and contempts done to his faithfull Embassadors; as appeareth Revel. 11. 5. where it is set down, That If any would hurt the two witnesses with their two olives, and two candlesticks, (whereby is signified the faithfull Preachers of the Gospel, with all their spirituall treasures and heavenly light) fire should proceed out of their mouthes, and devoure their adversaries; that is, The fire of Gods wrath should consume all that had oppressed them, either by mocks, flouts, railing, slanders, imprisonment, or any other kinde of indignity. Of this wee have a plaine example or two in the Scripture. First, we read how fire came downe from heaven, and consumed the contemptuous Captaine and his fifty, at the threatning and calling for of Eliah. Secondly, how two Beares came out of the Forrest, and tare in pieces two and forty youthes which mocked Elisha, the Prophet of God, calling him bald head, bald-head. So then by these examples it is

2 King. 1. 10
2 King. 2. 23

manifeſt, that howſoever the Lord may winke at theſe things for a time, and make as though he ſaw them not, yet the time will come, when hee will raine fire and brimſtone upon all the ſcoffers of his faithfull miniſters, and contemners of his Goſpel. All this is plainely declared in the firſt chapter of the Proverbs of Solomon: where is ſhewed how the wiſedome of God, even Jeſus Chriſt the higheſt wiſedome, doth cry aloud all abroad in the world, and manifeſt himſelfe in the open ſtreets; but yet is contemned of wicked worldlings, and ſcoffing fools.

Prov. 1. 24. Therefore ſaith Chriſt, Becauſe I have called, and ye refuſed, I have ſtretched out my hand, but none would regard: yee have hated knowledge, and deſpiſed all my counſell; therefore I will laugh at your deſtruction, and mocke when your feare commeth upon you, like a ſudden deſolation, and your deſtruction like a whirl winde. Then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not anſwer; they ſhall ſeek me early, but they ſhall not finde me. Here then we ſee his terrible wrath and vengeance, threatned from heaven, againſt all prophane contemners of Chriſt and his everlaſting Goſpel, or any of the faithfull publiſhers and proclaimers thereof. Behold therefore, ye deſpiſers, and wonder: conſider well what will become

of

of you in the end. Doe not think that the most just God will alwayes put it up at your hands; that ye should so manifestly contemne both his word and the most zealous Preachers and Professors thereof. No, no: assure your selves he will be even with you at last. He will smite you both sideling and overthwart: hee will dogge you, and pursue you with his judgements, and never leave following the chase with you, till he hath destroyed you, and consumed you from off the face of the earth. For remember, I pray you, what he saith in Deuteronomie; If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold of judgement, I will execute vengeance on mine enemies, and I will reward them that hate mee: I will make mine arrowes drunke with bloud, and my sword shall eat the flesh of mine adversaries. Dent. 32. 41, 42.

Phil. Truely, Sir, we may justly fear, that for our great contempt of the Gospel, and generall coldnesse, both in the profession and practice thereof, God will take it from us, and give it to a people that will bring forth the fruit thereof.

Theol. Wee may well feare indeed, lest for our sinnes, especially our loathing of the heavenly Manna, the Lord remove our candlestick, take away our silver trumpets, let us no

more heare the sweet bels of Aaron, cause all vision to faile, and our Sabbaths to cease, and bring upon us that most grievous and sore famine of not
Amos 8. hearing the word of the Lord, spoken of by Amos the Prophet. Then shall our Halcion dayes and golden yeares, bee turned into weeping, mourning, and lamentation. God for his infinite mercy sake turne it away from us.

Phil. Amen, Amen: and let us all pray earnestly night and day, that those fearfull judgements may, according to Gods infinite mercy, bee held backe, which our sinnes doe continually cry for: and that his most glorious Gospel may be continued to us and our posterity, even yet with greater successe.

Asun. No doubt it is a very great sin to despise the word of God: and I think there is none so bad that will doe it. For we ought to love Gods word: God forbid else. He that loveth not Gods word, it is pitty he liveth.

Theol. These are but words of course: It is an easie matter to speak good words: and very many will say as you say. But both you and they in your practice, doe plainely shew that you make no reckoning of it: you esteeme it no more than a dish-clout. I thinke, if the matter were well tryed, you have scant a Bible in your house. But though you have one, it

is

is manifest that you seldome read therein, with any care or conscience, and as seldome heare the word preached. How else could you be so ignorant as you are.

Asun. I grant that I and some others are somewhat negligent in the hearing and reading of the word of God; but you cannot say therefore wee doe contemne it.

Theol. Yes verily, your continuall negligence and carelessnesse doth argue a plaine contempt. Sure it is, you have no appetite nor stomack to the holy word of God. You had rather doe any thing, than either read or meditate in it: it is irksome unto you: you read not two chapters in a week. All holy exercises of religion are most bitter and tedious unto you: they are as vineger to your teeth, and smoak to your eyes. The immoderate love of this world, and of vanity hath took away your appetite from all heavenly things. And whereas you shift it off with negligence, as though that would excuse you; the Apostle hits you home, when he saith, How shall wee escape if we neglect so great salvation? Heb. 2. 3. Marke, that he saith, If we neglect.

Antil. Belike you thinke men have nothing else to doe, but read the Scriptures, and heare Sermons.

Theol. I doe not say so: I doe not

say you should doe nothing else. For God doth allow you, with a good conscience, and in his feare, to follow the workes of your calling, as hath beene said before. But this I condemne in you and many others, that you will give no time to private prayers, reading and meditation in Gods word, neither morning nor evening; neither before your busines, nor after. And although you have often vacant time enough, yet you will rather bestow it in vanity, and idle prating, and gossipping, than in any good exercise of Religion. Which doth plainely shew, that you neither delight in holy things, neither is there any true feare of God before your eyes.

Antil. I tell you plainely, we must tend our businesse, we may goe beg else; we cannot live by the Scriptures. If wee follow Sermons, wee shall never thrive. What? do you think every man is bound to read the Scriptures? Have wee not our five wits? Doe wee not know what we have to do? you would make fooles of us belike. But we are neither drunke nor mad.

Theol. That every man (of what condition soever) is bound in conscience to heare and read the word of God, hath beene shewed, and proved in the beginning of our conference; but as for your five wits, they will not serve

serve your turne in these matters, though you had fifteene wits. For all the wit, reason, and understanding of naturall men, in Gods matters is but blindnesse and meere foolishnesse. The Apostle saith, That the wisedome of the most wise in this world, is not only foolishnesse with God, but indeed very enmity against God. And againe he saith, That the naturall man (with all his five wits) understandeth not the things of the Spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned. Most prudently to this point speaketh Elihu, saying, There is a spirit in man, but the inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding. 1 Cor. 2. 19. Rom. 8. 7. 1 Cor. 2. 14. Iob. 32. 2.

Antil. I understand not these Scriptures which you doe alleadge: they doe not sinke into my head.

Theol. I thinke so indeed: for the holy Ghost saith, Wisedome is too high for a foole. Prov. 24. 7.

Antil. What? doe you call me foole? I am no more foole than your selfe.

Theol. I call you not foole: but I tel you what the Scripture saith; which calleth all men (though otherwise never so wise, politick and learned) very fooles, till they bee truly enlightned and inwardly sanctified by the Spirit of God: as appeareth, Tit. 3. 3. where the Apostle affirmeth that both Titus and himselfe, before they received the illumi-

illuminating Spirit of Gods grace, were very fooles, without wit, and without all sense in Gods matters.

Phil. I pray you good Mr. *Theologus*, let him alone; for hee will never have done cavilling. I see he is a notable caviller. Let us therfore proceed to speak of the fift signe of condemnation, which is swearing.

Theol. It may well indeed be called a signe of condemnation. For I think it more than a signe, it is indeed an evident demonstration of a Reprobate. For I never knew any man truely fearing God in his heart, that was an usuall and a common swearer.

Phil. I am flat of your minde for that. For it cannot bee, that the true feare of God and ordinary swearing should dwell together in one man; sith swearing is a thing forbidden by flat statute: And God addeth a sore threat to his Law, That he will not hold him guiltlesse that takes his name in vaine; but will most sharpely and severely punish that man.

Theol. You say true. And God saith moreover, that if we do not feare and dread his glorious and fearfull Name JEHOVAH, he will make our plagues wonderfull. He saith also by his Prophet Malachie, that he will bee as a swift witnesse against swearers. The Prophet Zachary saith, that the flying

Deut. 28. 59

Mal. 3. 5.

Zach. 5. 24.

ing book of Gods curse and vengeance shall enter into the house of the swearer, and he shall be cut off.

Therefore let all swearers take heed, and look to themselves in time: for we see there is a rod in pisse laid up in store for them.

Phil. These threatnings being so great and grievous; and that from the God of heaven himselfe, a man would thinke should cause mens hearts to quake and tremble, and make them affraid to rap out such oaths as thee do, if they were not altogether hardned, past feeling, and past grace.

Theol. True indeed. But yet wee see by lamentable experience, how men are given over both to sweare and forsweare. For at this day there is no sinne more common amongst us than swearing: for many there bee, which cannot speak ten words, but one shall be an oath. And numbers have got such a wicked custome of swearing, that they can by no meanes leave it, no more than a Black-moore can change his skinne, or a Leopard his spots: For it is made naturall unto them through custome, and they have got the habit of it. I do verily thinke, if it were high treason to sweare, yet some could not leave swearing. And sure I am (as light as we make of it) that it is high treason against the Crowne

Crowne of heaven: yea, it is a ſinne immediatly againſt God, even againſt his owne perſon: and therefore he hath forbidden it in the firſt Table of his Law.

Phil. Queſtionleſſe this vice of ſwearing is, of all other ſinnes, moſt rife in this Land. For you ſhall have little boyes and children in the ſtreets rappe out oathes in moſt fearfull manner. It would make a mans heart quake to hear them. We may think, they have ſucked them out of their mothers breaſts: but ſure wee are, they have learned them from the evill example of their parents. And now adayes we cannot almoſt talk with a man, but (in ordinary ſpeech) he will belch out one oath or another.

Theol. I will tell you a ſtrange thing, and with great griefe I ſpeak it: I do verily thinke there are ſworn in this land an hundred thouſand oathes every day in the yeere.

Phil. No doubt Sir, you are within compaſſe. For now almoſt ſo many men, ſo many oathes; excepting ſome few in compariſon. Nay, I know divers, of mine owne experience, which if they may be kept in talke, will ſweare every day in the yeare an hundred oathes for their parts.

Theol. O what a lamentable thing is it! wee may well take up the old complaint of the Prophet Jeremy, who ſaith,

saith that in his time, The land did mourne, because of oathes, **And wee may well wonder, that the Land sinketh not because of oaths. For if God were not a God of infinite patience, how could hee endure his most sacred and glorious Name to bee so many thousand times blasphemed in one day, and that by such miserable wretches as we be!**

Ier. 23. 10.

Phil. We may indeed admire and wonder at the patience and long suffering of God, that he spareth us so long, and giveth us so large a time of repentance. But sure it is, that the Prophet saith, That howsoever the Lord is slow to anger, yet he is great in power, and will not surely clear the wicked. Though he may winke at their monstrous oathes for a time, yet he forgetteth them never a whit, but scoreth them up, and registreth them in his book of accounts: so as they stand in record against them. And when the great day of reckoning shall come, he will set them all in order before them, and lay them to their charge.

Nah. 1. 3.

Let not the wicked swearers and blasphemers therefore think that they shall alwaies scape scot-free, because God letteth them alone a while, and deferreth their punishment. For the longer God deferreth, the more terrible will his strokes be when they come. The longer

longer an arrow is held in the bow, the stronger will be the shot when it commeth forth. Though God have leaden feet, and commeth slowly to execute wrath, yet hath hee an iron hand, and will strike deadly when hee commeth. Though God giveth the wicked security for a time (saith Job) yet his eyes are fixed upon all their waies. And in another place he saith, The wicked are reserved unto the day of destruction, & they shall bee brought forth unto the day of wrath. So then, the holy man Job plainly affirmeth, that the state and condition of all the rich and wealthy worldlings, is as the condition of an Oxe, that is fatted up against the day of slaughter. For he saith, They spend their dayes in wealth, and suddenly goe downe to hell. But now I pray you nominate the oathes which are so rife and common amongst us.

Iob. 24. 23.

Iob. 21. 30.

Iob. 21. 13.

Theol. **There be six oathes which are (of all other) most rife and common in every mans mouth; and they be these.**

Six common oaths.

By my faith.
By my troth.
By our Lady.
By S. Mary.
By God.
As God shall judge me.

For you cannot lightly talke with a man, but he will flash out some one

of

of these in his ordinary speech.

Asun. Doe you count it so great a matter for a man to sweare by his faith, or his troth.

Theol. **Yes indeed doe I. For our faith and our troth are the most precious Jewels wee have. Shall we then lay them to gage for every word we speak? it sheweth we are of small credit; nay, very bankrupts. For who but a bankrupt will lay the best Jewell in his house to pledge for every small trifle.**

Asun. I know a man that will never sweare but by Cock, or Py, or Mouse-foot. I hope you will not say these be oathes. For hee is as honest a man as ever brake bread. You shall not heare an oath come out of his mouth.

Theol. **I doe not thinke hee is so honest a man as you make him. For it is no small sinne to sweare by creatures. The Lord saith by the Prophet** Jeremy, They have forsaken mee, and sworne by them that are no gods. Ier. 5.7. **So then to sweare by Creatures, is to forsake God: and I trow you will not say, hee is an honest man which forsaketh God.**

Asun. I do not beleeve, that to sweare by small things is a forsaking of God.

Theol. **You, and such as you are, will beleeve no more of the word of God, than will stand with your fantasie,**

false. But, whatsoever you believe, or beleeve not, the Word of God standeth sure: and no jot of it shall ever be proved false. But this I will say unto you, because you thinke it so small a matter to sweare by Creatures; That the more vile and base the thing is which you sweare by, the greater is the oath: because you ascribe that unto a base creature, which is onely proper to God: namely, to know our hearts, and bee a discerner of secret things. For whatsoever a man sweareth by, hee calleth it as a witnesse unto his conscience, that hee speaketh the truth, and lyeth not: which thing onely belongeth unto God. And therefore in swearing by creatures, we doe robbe God of his honour. Therefore to sweare by the crosse of the money, or by bread, or by mouse foote, or the fire, which they call Gods Angel, or any such like, is a robbing of God of his honour, and an ascribing of that to the creature, which is proper only to the Creator.

Asun. What say you then to them that sweare by the Masse, and by the Rood?

Theol. Their sinne is as great as the other: For it is an hainous thing to sweare by Idols, as S. Mary our Lady, by the Masse, by the Rood, &c. The Prophet Amos saith, They that sweare

Amos 8. 4.

sweare by the sinne of Samaria; and that say, Thy God, O Dan, liveth: even they shall fall, and never rise up againe. **To sweare by the sinne of Samaria, is to sweare by Idols: for Samaria was full of Idols.**

Moreover the Lord threatneth by the Prophet Zephanie, **That he will cut off them that sweare by the Lord, and by Malcham, or by their King. For the Idolaters called their Idoll** Molech, **their King.** Zeph. 1. 5.

Asun. Seeing you condemne both swearing by creatures, and swearing by Idols; what then must we sweare by? You would have us sweare by nothing belike.

Theol. **In our ordinary communication we must not sweare at all, either by one thing or another: but (as our Lord teacheth us)** our communication must bee Yea, yea; Nay, nay: For whatsoever is more than these, commeth of evill. Mat. 5. 37. **And S.** James **saith,** Before all things, my brethren, sweare not: neither by heaven, nor by earth, nor by any other oath: but let your Yea be Yea, and your Nay Nay, lest you fall into condemnation. James 5. 12.

Anti. It seemeth you are an Anabaptist. You condemne all swearing, you will have no swearing at all.

Theol. **Not so, for though I condemne swearing by creatures, swearing**

ting by Idols, and vaine ſwearing: yet I doe allow of ſwearing before a Magiſtrate, and priuately alſo, in matters of weight and importance, for the further bolting out of the truth.

This is warranted from Gods own mouth, where he ſaith, Thou ſhalt ſweare, The Lord liueth in truth, in iudgement, and in righteouſneſſe. And in theſe caſes only the name of God is to be ſworn by, as it is written, Thou ſhalt feare the Lord thy God, and thou ſhalt ſerue him, and ſhalt cleaue unto him, and ſhall ſweare by his Name.

Ier. 2.

Deut. 10. 20

Aſun. May we not ſweare by God in our common talke?

Theol. At no hand. For that is to take the name of God in vaine, which you know is forbidden.

And one of the wiſe Heathen could ſay thus, When an oath is laid upon thee, undertake it for two cauſes: either to deliver thy ſelfe from ſome grieuous crime and accuſation, or elſe to preſerue thy friends from danger. So then that Heathen man in common talke, will not allow any oath, much leſſe to ſweare by God. Another ſaith, Auoid an oath though thou ſweare truly. So then we ſee vain ſwearing condemned, even by Heathens.

Iſocr. ad Dem.

Phocilid.

Aſun. Yea, but for all that, wee muſt ſweare; men will not beleeue us elſe.

Theol. Neither yet will they be-

leeue

leeve you any whit the more for your swearing. For it doth manifestly appeare, that thousands make no conscience at all of it. They make no more conscience of it than of cracking of nuts: and therefore what wise man will beleeve them, though they sweare never so much? But if you would make conscience alwayes to speak the truth from your heart without any oathes at all, you shall be better beleeved of all honest and wise men, than otherwise with a thousand oathes.

Antil. It is the custome to sweare.

Theol. **But a wicked and divelish custome.**

Antil. I hope, Sir, we may sweare, as long as we sweare truly, and sweare by nothing but that which is good.

Theol. **It hath beene answered before, that in vaine matters you may not sweare at all.**

Antil. As long as wee doe no worse than that, I hope God will hold us excused.

Theol. **God will not hold you excused, when you breake his commandements, and continue so doing.**

Antil. What say you then to them, that swear wounds and bloud, and such like, in a bravery, thinking that it setteth out their speech very well?

Theol. **Hell gapeth for them: and they**

they shall know one day what it is to blaspheme God.

Antil. What may we thinke of such as sweare by Gods life, Gods soule, Gods body, Gods heart?

Theol. That their case is most woefull and dangerous; and I quake at the naming of them. They are most horrible, monstrous, and outragious blasphemies: enough to make the stones in the streete to cracke, and the clouds to fall upon our heades. And we may thinke, that all the Divels in hell are in a readinesse, to carry such blasphemous villaines headlong into that lake, which burneth with fire and brimstone for ever.

Antil. Do you find in Scriptures, that God will so severely punish swearers?

Theol. Yes verily. For besides that which hath beene spoken before, wee have diders other examples: First of Senacherib, the King of Athur, who for his outragious blasphemies against the God of Heaven, was in most fearfull and tragicall manner slaine by his owne sons, Adramelech and Sharezer, and that in the temple, when hee was worshiping his Idoll god Nisroch. And yet behold a more fearfull example of Gods wrath against blasphemers.

2 King. 19. 37.

We read, that an hundred thousand of the Aramites were slaine by the Israelites

Israelites in one day for blaſphe-ming God, 1 King. 20. 29. and ſeven and twenty thouſand being left, and flying into the city of Aphek for re-fuge, were all ſlaine by the fall of an huge great wall. What ſhall I here ſpeake how the ſeven ſonnes of Saul the King of Iſrael were hanged up before the Lord in mount Gibeah, for the breach of the oath made to the Gi-beonites long before? in theſe exam-ples we may plainely ſee, that the juſt God, even in this life, ſometimes will be revenged of blaſphemers and oath-breakers. And therefore the very hea-then in all ages have beene very care-full for the performing of oathes: as Pharaoh King of Egypt willed Joſeph to goe up into the land of Canaan to bury his Father, according to his oath made to his Father. 1 Sam. 21.

Phil. Me thinketh theſe ſo terrible and fearfull examples of Gods venge-ance againſt ſwearers and blaſphemers, ſhould ſtrike ſome terror into the hearts of our blaſphemers.

Theol. One ſhould thinke ſo indeed, if any thing could doe it. But, alas, they are ſo hardened in it, and in all other ſinne, that nothing can move them: except peradventure there were a Law made, that every ſwearer and blaſphemer ſhould hold his hand a quarter of an houre in boyling lead.

This

This, or some such like severe law, might peradventure curb them a little, and make them bite in their oathes. But otherwise they will never feare any thing, till they are in hell fire, when it will be too late to repent.

Phil. What may bee the cause of this so often and great swearing? for surely it is no inherent and inbred sin in our nature, as some of the other sinnes be.

Theol. No verily. But these three I judge to be the causes of it:

Custome.
Want of admonition.
Want of punishment.

Phil. What then are the remedies of it?

Theol. The remedies are these:

Disuse.
Prayer.
Friendly admonition.
Some sharpe Law.

Phil. Well Sir, now wee have heard enough of swearing: I pray you proceed to the next signe of condemnation, which is lying.

Theol. Swearing and lying bee of very neere kindred. For he that is a common swearer, is for the most part a common lyer also: For hee that maketh no conscience of swearing, will make no conscience of lying. And as the Lord hateth the one, so also he hateth the other: And as he punisheth the one, so will he punish the other.

Therefore

Therefore Solomon saith, Lying lips are an abomination unto the Lord. S. John saith, Without shall bee dogges, enchanters, whore-mongers, murtherers, and whosoever loveth or maketh lyes. Againe the same holy man of God saith, The lyers shall have their part & portion in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

Prov.12.22.

Rev. 21.15.

Rev.21.8.

Phil. These Scriptures which you alledge doe manifestly declare that God abhorreth lyers, and hath reserved great torments for them. Therfore the Princely Prophet David saith, that he would banish all lyers from his house. He that telleth lyes (saith he) shall not remaine in my sight. A lying tongue is one of the six things which God doth hate, and his soule abhorre. Yet for all this, wee see by lamentable experience, how many have even taught their tongues to lye (as the Prophet saith) and there is no truth in their lips. This vice is almost as common as swearing. For it is hard to finde a man that will speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth from his heart, in simplicity & plainnesse, at all times, in all places, and amongst all persons, without all glozing or dissembling, either for feare, gaine, flattery, men-pleasing, hiding of faults, or any sinister respect whatsoever. Where, I say, is this man to bee found?

Psal.101.7.

Prov.6. 16,17.

Ier.9.

found? I would faine see him, I would faine look upon such a man: it would doe my heart good to behold him: I would rejoyce to set mine eyes upon such a man.

Theol. Such a man as you speake of, is hardly to bee found among the sons of men. They be black Swans in the earth, they bee white Crowes, they be rare birds. For there be very few that will speake the truth from their heart: yet some such I hope there be. But for the most part, and amongst the greater sort, lying, dissembling, and fraud, doe beare all the sway. There is no truth, no honesty, no conscience, no simplicity, no plaine dealing amongst men in these most corrupt times. Faith and truth are parted cleane away. And as the Kingly Prophet saith, The faithfull are failed from among the children of men. They speak deceitfully every one with his neighbour; flattering with their lips, and speaking with a double heart. Men now adayes study the art of lying, flattering, fawning, glozing and dissembling: they have a heart and a heart. They have honey in their mouth, and gall in their heart. Their tongues are as soft as butter and oyle: but their hearts are full of bitternesse, poyson and wormewood. They are full of outward courtesie and

Psal. 12.

and civility, full of Court-holy-water, when there is no truth nor plainnesse in their inward affection. They will speak you faire, when they would cut your throat. They will shew you a good countenance, when they would eat your heart with Garlick. In outward shew they will carry themselves plausibly, when their hearts are full of venome and malice. This viperous brood doe but watch their times and opportunities, till they can get a man upon the hip; and then they will sting him, and worke their malice upon him. These fawning curs will not barke till they bite; they will lurk, and lye close, till they spye their vantage, and then they will shew themselves in their kinde: then they will hoist a man, and turne him over the perke, if they can. These men are like the waters, which are most deep, when they are most calme: like a dangerous rock hid under a calme sea; or as the Heathens say, like the Syrens song, which is the Sailers wrack: like the Fowlers whistle, which is the birds death: like the hid bait, which is the fishes bane: like the Harpies, which have Virgins faces, and Vultures talons; or like Hyena, which speaketh like a friend, and devoureth like a foe: or, as the Scripture saith, like Joab, the captaine of the hoast, 2 Sam. 20. 10

which spake kindly to Amasa another Captaine, and killed him, when presently hee stabd him; or like unto the Herodians and Pharasees servants, which came to our Lord Jesus with many fawning insinuations, calling him good Master, and telling him that hee was the plaine truth, that hee taught the way of God truly, hee regarded no mans person, and many good morrows, and all this geere, when as in very deed their purpose was to entangle him in his words, and to entrap him, that they might catch advantage against him, and so cut his throat, and give him pap with a hatchet. This is it which the wise man saith, A man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feet. Prov. 29. 5

And againe, As silver-drosse over-laid upon an earthen pot: so are fawning lips, and an evill heart. Prov. 26. 23.

And in another place he saith, Hee that beareth hatred will counterfeit with his lips: but hee layeth up deceit in his heart. When he shall shew his voyce favourably, trust him not. For there are seven abominations in his heart: He will cover hatred by deceit: but his malice shall be discovered in the congregation. Prov. 26. 24

In another place hee pronounceth a curse upon all these hollow-hearted hypocrites, and meal-mouthed flatterers. For, saith hee, Unto him that blesseth Prov. 27. 14.

his friend with a loud voice, betimes in the morning, rising up early, a curse shall be imputed.

Phil. You have very well described the conditions of the men of this age, which have faces, countenances, and tongues, but no hearts; which professe lying and dissembling; which say, hee cannot live that cannot dissemble; which have faire faces, and false hearts; which have forgotten that plaine honesty is deep policy.

Theol. The holy Ghost often in the Proverbs of Solomon calleth all unregenerate men fooles: or, as it is in the Hebrew, men without hearts: Because they have no heart to God, no heart to his word, no heart to his children, no heart to godlinesse, no heart to any thing that good is. They are without an honest heart, an upright heart, a plaine heart. They are all in words, nothing in deeds. They promise mountaines, and performe molehils. They will speak well of Religion, and practise nothing. They will give faire words to their friends, and doe just nothing for them.

Phil. The world is full of these masked counterfeits: and lying and dissembling did never more abound.

Theol. It is too true, that lying and dissembling are most rife, and overcommon vices amongst all sorts of

men: but especially it doth overflow and superabound in shop-keepers and servants. For both these make a trade and occupation of it: they can doe no other but lye. It cleaveth unto them as the nayle to the doore.

Phil. I do certainely know some shop-keepers, which (to utter their bad wares, and to blind the eyes of the simple) doe trade in lying all the day long: from Sun to Sun, from the opening of the shop and windowes, to the shutting of the same. And what is their life (if customers come in apace) but swearing, lying, dissembling, and deceiving? They will lye as fast as a dog will trot, as wee say. It is wonder that their shops and all their wares do not fire over their heads, for their so common, so lewd, and so abominable lying; and that against their owne knowledge, against their conscience, against God, against their neighbour, against heaven and earth, men and Angels.

Theol. True it is, we may marvell at the long suffering of God in this behalfe. But this is to be noted, that God doth not immediatly punish all notorious sinners in this life: but reserveth thousands to the judgement of the great day. In this life he only culleth out some few, whom he limiteth for the example of others, that they might feare and tremble, and learne by o-

ther

ther mens harmes to beware.

Therefore, even in this life, we see before our eyes, some lyers, some drunkards, some whore-mongers, some sweerers, some misers of the world, some ruffians and cut-throats, stricken downe by the revenging hand of God: But whereas God smiteteth one of these in this life, hee letteth an hundred escape. For if hee should punish all offendors in this life, to what purpose should the judgement to come serve? If hee should punish none, then we should think there were no God, or that hee were shut up idle in heaven, and would doe neither good nor evill, nor once meddle in the matters of the earth; as some Epicures have dreamed. Therefore to avoid both these extremities, God in his heavenly wisedome hath thought good to meete with some, even in this world.

Phil. I am of this minde, that the goods which men get by swearing, lying, and deceit, will never prosper.

Theol. You are not therein deceived. For God will blow upon all such kinde of evill gotten goods, and they shall be put in a bottomelesse purse, as the Prophet saith. The holy Ghost in the book of the Proverbs hath many excellent sayings to this effect, as chap. 13.11. The riches of vanity shall be diminished; but hee which laboureth Hag. 1.6.

with the hand, shall increase them. And
Prov. 10. againe, Hee that dealeth deceitfully,
Prov. 14.27 shall become poore: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich. In another place he saith, the deceitfull man rosteth not that which hee hath caught in hunting. That is, hee shall not long enjoy or tast the prey, which he hath gotten by fraud. For either one trouble or other will come upon him, that he shall not bee able to possesse, or take delight in the spoyle. Therefore it is said, The bread of deceit is sweet to a man: but after, his mouth shall be filled with gravell. That is, in the end the crafty person shall meet with many troubles. For either his conscience will upbraid him and check him, or vengeance will plague him for his deceit. The feares, cares, and sorrowes which hee shall have, shall be as it were so many sharp stones, to set his teeth on edge, and to vex him. Wherefore in stead of meat, hee shall feed on gravell: and in stead of wheat, on pebble stones. Small pleasure is taken in the end in goods ill gotten, or livings unlawfully come by. For the holy Ghost hath passed sentence upon them, that they shall never prosper.

Phil. It sometimes falleth out, that they prosper for a time: but, as wee say, The third heire shall never enjoy them. For God will curse them in our posterity:

rity: and our childrens children ſhall feele the ſmart of our ſinnes. Therefore the holy man Job ſaith; The off-ſpring of the wicked ſhall not be ſatisfied with bread: for out of doubt God will bleſſe that only which is got with a good conſcience, in the works of our calling, and it ſhall remaine bleſſed unto us, and our poſterity. Therefore the Spirit ſaith, The juſt man that walketh in his uprightneſſe is bleſſed, and bleſſed ſhall his children be after him. But God will not bleſſe, but curſe that which is got with an evill conſcience: as ſwearing, lying, diſſembling, deceiving, &c. Iob 27.14. Prov.2.7.

Theol. **Some ancient writers have ſpoken very prudently to this point. For one ſaith,** *Injuſta lucra breves habent voluptates, longos autem dolores.* **That is,** Unjuſt gaine hath long ſorrow, and ſhort joy. **Another ſaith,** *Eligas damnum potiùs quàm turpe lucrum: illud enim ſemel tantum te dolore afficiet, hoc verò ſemper.* **That is,** Chuſe loſſe rather than filthy lucre: for the one will grieve thee but once, the other for ever. **A third ſaith,** *Melius eſt honeſtè pauperem eſſe, quàm turpiter divitem. Hoc enim commiſerationem, illud verò reprehenſionem adſert.* It is better to bee honeſtly poore, than wickedly rich. For the one moveth pitty, the other reproofe. **One of the wiſe Heathen alſo ſaith,** Wee may not wax rich unjuſtly, Ierom. Anguſt. Bernard. Eurip. Phœniſſ.

but live of just things, which he calleth holy things.

Phil. Have wee not examples in the Scriptures of such as have beene punished for lying?

Theol. Yes: for wee read how the Gibeonites for their lying and dissembling were made drudges and slaves to the Israelites; Gehezi also, the servant of Elisha the Prophet, for his lying and covetousnesse together, was smitten with a most grievous leprosie. Annanias and Sapphira his wife, for their lying and dissembling, were stricken downe stark dead by the immediate hand of God at the rebuke of Peter.

Iosh.9.23. 2 King.5. Acts 5.5.

Zophar, one of Jobs friends, speaking of these kinds of men, saith, They shall suck the gall of Aspes, and the Vipers tongue shall slay them. They shall flie from the iron weapons, and a bow of steele shall strike them thorow.

Iob.20.16, 24.

Now then by all these examples we may plainly see, how greatly God abhorreth lying and dissembling.

Phil. O therefore that we could follow the counsell of the Apostle, who saith, Lye not one to another: sith you have put off the old man, with his workes. And againe, Cast away lying, and speak every one the truth to his neighbour. The manner of speech which the Apostle useth is very forcible, implying thus

Col.3.9 Ephes.4.25.

thus much: That wee ſhould in a kinde of diſdaine or deteſtation caſt it away, and throw it from us, as a filthie ſtinking and berayed clout, hanging a bout a mans neck, which he doth ſuddenly ſnatch away, and hurle into the fire; as being aſhamed that ever it ſhould be ſeen or knowne. Would to God therefore that wee were come to ſuch a deteſtation and loathing of lying, that we would even ſpattle at it, and cry, Fie upon it, and all that uſe it! O that wee could hate it as the Divell, which is the Father of it, and as hell fire, which is the reward of it! O that wee were come but ſo far as the Heathen man, who ſaith, I hate him as the gates of hell, who hath one thing in his tongue, and another in his heart! Homer. Iliad. 3.

Antil. Yet for all this, wee find in the Scriptures, that even ſome of the godly have been taken tardy in lying, and yet have not ſinned in ſo doing, as Abraham, Jacob, Rahab, the Midwives of Egypt: and therefore why may not wee doe ſo too?

Theol. I told you before, that you may not make the infirmities of Gods people, rules for you to live by. And further I anſwer, that all theſe did offend in their lying. Some of them indeed, I grant, are commended for their love to the Church and charitable affections to Gods people, but

none of them simply for lying: which is a thing condemned even of the Heathen. For saith one of them; Lying doth corrupt the life of man: and every wise and godly man doth hate lying.

Euripi. Phœniss.

Antil. But may we not lye now and then for advantage?

Theol. No verily, neither is there any good vantage to be got that way. For when you have made up your accounts, all charges deducted, and all expences defraied, your cleare gaines will be very small. For by your wilfull and customary lying you gaine inward griefe, and lose true joy: you gain short pleasure, and lose perpetuall glory; you gaine hell, and lose heaven, you make the Divell your friend, and God your enemy. Now then reckon your gaine.

Phil. I pray you let us grow towards a conclusion of this point: and shew us briefly the chiefe causes of lying.

Theol. The chiefe causes of lying are these:

Custome.
Feare.
Covetousnesse.
The Divell.

Phil. What be the remedies.

Theol. The remedies be these:

Disuse.
Godly boldnesse

Con-

Contentation.
Earnest prayer.

Phil. You have spoken enough of this vice to cause all such to abhorre it, and forsake it, as have any drop of grace, or spark of Gods feare in them: but as for them that are filthy, let them bee more filthy. Now I pray you speake your judgement of the seventh signe of condemnation: which is drunkennesse.

Theol. **It is so brutish and beastly a sinne, that a man would thinke it should not need to bee spoken against; but that all reasonable men should even abhorre it, and quake to thinke of it. For it is a most swinish thing: it maketh of a man a beast: it taketh away the heart of man from all goodnesse, as witnesseth the Prophet** Hosea, cap. 4. 11. saying, Whoredome, wine and new wine take away the heart. **For what heart, what stomach, what appetite can whoremongers and drunkards have to any thing that is good: either to heare, or read the word of God, or to pray, or to meditate in the same: Alas, they are farre from it, far from God, and farre from all grace and goodnesse. Therefore the Prophet** Joel **saith,** Awake ye drunkards: weepe and howle ye drinkers of wine. **Yea, the mighty God of heaven doth pronounce a woe against them, saying,** Woe unto them that rise up early to follow Ioel 1.5. Esa. 5.11.

follow drunkennesse: and to them that continue untill night, till the wine doe enflame them. **Our Lord Jesus giveth us a caveat to take heed of it:** Take heed, saith he, that your hearts bee not overcome with surfeiting and drunkennesse, and the cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. **Thus you hear how both Christ himselfe, and sundry of the Prophets doe thunder downe from heaven against this grosse beastlinesse, which now aboundeth and raigneth amongst the sonnes of men.**

Luk.21.34.

Phil. True indeed. But yet almost nothing will make men leave it, for it is a most rife and over common vice. Wee see many that thinke themselves some bodies (and, as we say, no small fooles) which yet will be overtaken with it, & thereby lose their credit and reputation with all wise men: yea, do prove themselves to be but swine, and brute beasts, as the holy Ghost avoucheth, saying, Wine is a mocker, and strong drinke is raging. Whosoever is deceived therein is not wise.

Prov.20.1.

Theol. **The wise King in the same book doth most notably and fully describe unto us the inconveniences and mischiefs which do accompany drunkennesse, and follow drunkards at the heeles.** To whom (he saith) is woe? to whom is alas? to whom is strife? to whom

Prov.23.29.

whom is babbling? to whom are wounds without cause? to whom is the redness of the eyes? Even to them that tarry long at the wine: to them that goe and seeke out mixt wine. **In the same chapter he saith,** Bee not of the number of them, which are bibbers of wine, or of them which glut themselves with flesh: for the drinker and the feaster shall become poore: and the sleeper shall be clothed with rags. **Moreover, he saith,** their eyes shall behold strange women; **and that** they shall be like him that lyeth in the midst of the Sea, and sleepeth in the top of the mast. **In all these speeches the holy Ghost doth, in most lively manner, describe unto us the properties of drunkards;** even their staggering, their reeling, their snoring, their senslesse sensuality. **Behold then what be the cursed fruits & events of drunkennes: Even these which follow; woe, alas, griefe, misery, beggery, poverty, shame, lusts, strife, babbling, brawling, fightings, quarreling, surfeiting, sickenesse, diseases, swinish sleeping, security, and sensuality. So then I conclude, that drunkennes is a vice more beseeming an hog, than any reasonable man. And as one saith, It is the Metropolitan City of all the province of vices.**

Prov. 23. 21.

Prov. 23. 33.

Well therefore saith the Heathen Writer, When the wine is in, a man is as

Demost. Olinth.

as a running coach without a coachman

Phil. Let us heare what executions have beene done upon drunkards in former ages, that now men may learne to take heed by their examples.

1 Sam. 13. 29 1 King. 20. 20 Theol. Ammon, **one of** Davids **ungracious children, being drunk, was slaine by his brother,** Absalom. Benhadad, **King of** Syria, **being drunk, was discomfited by** Ahab **King of** Israel. Elah, **King of** Israel **being drunke, was slaine by** Zymri **his servant, and captaine of his Chariots: who also succeeded him in the Kingdome.** Lot, **being drunke, committed incest with his owne daughters; and therefore was punisht in his posterity. Thus wee see what executions have beene done, even upon Kings, for this kind of sin. Therefore let men learne once at last to shun vice, and embrace vertue, and, as the Apostle saith, to make an end of their salvation in feare and trembling. For all our shifts and starting-holes will serve us to no purpose in the end: but when wee have fisked hither and thither never so much, yet at the last we must be faine to bee shut up in Gods wrath.**

1 King. 16. 10

Gen. 19. 37.

Antil. What, I pray you, do you make it so great a matter if a man bee a little overtaken with drinke now and then? There is no man but he hath his faults; and the best of us all may bee amended

If

If neighbours meet together now and then at the Alehouſe, and play a game at Maw for a pot of Ale, meaning no hurt; I take it to bee good fellowſhip, and a good meanes to encreaſe love amongſt neighbours; and not ſo hainous a thing as you make it.

Theol. **I ſee you would faine make faire weather of it, and ſmooth over the matter with ſweet words; as though there were no ſuch great evill in it. But howſoever you mince it, and blanch it over, yet the Apoſtle ſaith flatly, that** Drunkards ſhall not inherit the Kingdome of God. 1 Cor. 6. **I think this one ſentence is enough to amaze and ſtrike through the hearts of all drunkards in the world: for it is as much in effect, as if the Apoſtle had ſaid, All drunkards are notorious reprobates and hell-hounds; branded of Satan, and devoted to perpetuall deſtruction and damnation.**

But you ſay you meane no hurt. I anſwer, whatſoever you meane, your actions are naught, and your fellowſhip as bad. For what good meaning can you have, or what good fellowſhip call you it, for poore labouring men, artificers, and ſuch like to ſit idle all the day long in Taverns, and Alehouſes, miſ-ſpending their time, and their money in gaming, rioting, ſwearing, ſtaring, ſwilling, bezzeling, bibbing,

bing, brawling and brabling: There is no true fellowship in it: it is meer impiety, if wee may call it impiety; for poore men do live idely, dissolutely, neglecting their callings, while their poore wives and children sit crying at home for bread, being ready to starve, to beg, or to steal. I pray you speak your conscience, what good fellowship is there in this?

Antil. Yet for all that, there bee some which abstaine from Ale-houses, and yet are as bad as any other. For they will back-bite and slander their neighbours: they will doe them a shrewd turne, as soone as any other: they are envious, they censure us, and disdaine our company: yet wee think our selves as good as they, for all their shews of holinesse.

Theol. You speake more than you know, or can justifie, against some better than your selfe. But, if it were so, you should not justifie one sinne by another, a lesser by a greater: which is to no purpose.

Antil. Will you then condemne all good fellowship?

Theol. No, no: I do greatly allow godly and Christian fellowship; and acknowledge it to bee one of the chiefest comforts we have in the world. I know wee are commanded to love brotherly fellowship. But as for your pot-

1 Pet. 2. 11.

pot-companionship, I hate it, and abhorre it. For it is written, Hee that followeth the idle; shall bee filled with poverty. And againe, He that keepeth company with banqueters, shameth his father And in another place, Hee that loveth pastime, shall bee a poore man: and hee that loveth wine and oyle, shall not be rich. Prov.28.19. Prov.23.7. Prov.28.17

Phil. Good M. *Theologus*, talke no more with him: but let us draw neere to the winding up of this matter; and tell us, in a word, which be the chiefe causes of drunkennesse.

Theol. The causes are these: Causes of Drunkennesse.

Ill company.
Ale-houses.
Idlenesse.
A wicked humor.

Phil. Which be the true remedies?

Theol. The remedies are these: Remedies for drunkennesse.

Avoiding of evill company.
Shunning of Ale-houses.
Labouring in your callings.
A good course of life.

Phil. Well Sir, you have waded farre enough in this point: Let us now come to the eighth signe of condemnation, which is idlenesse.

Theol. Concerning idlenesse, this I say briefly: that it is the mother of all vice, and the stepdame of all vertue: yea, it is the very bel-dame of all enormities. It is the mother of whore-

whoredome, the mother of pride, the mother of theft, the mother of drunkennesse, the mother of ignorance, the mother of error, the mother of poverty, the mother of slandering and backbiting, prattling and gossiping, brawling, scolding, quarrelling: and what not? Idlenesse was one of the principall sinnes of Sodome, as the Prophet Ezekiel testifieth, saying, Pride, fulnesse of bread, and abundance of idlenesse was in her, and in her daughters. Solomon is very plentifull in this matter: For, saith hee, The sluggard lusteth, and hath nought. And againe, The sluggard is wiser in his owne conceit, than seven men that can give a sensible reason: That is, he taketh himselfe the wisest of many, because he spareth his body, when others take paines: hee saith, Yet a little sleep, yet a little slumber, yet a little foulding of the hands: and his poverty commeth like a traveller; that is, unawares: and his necessity, like an armed man; that is, strongly. Then hee fouldeth his hands together, and eateth his owne flesh. For, He hideth his hand in his bosome, and it grieveth him to put it to his mouth againe.

Ezek. 16. 49

Prov. 13. 4.

Prov. 26. 16.

Prov. 24. 33.

Eccles. 4. 5.

Prov. 26. 15.

In another place the holy Ghost saith, The sloathfull man will not plough because of Winter: therefore he shall beg in Summer, and have nothing.

Againe,

Againe, The sloathfull man is brother to him that is a great waster. Prov. 9. 18.

Moreover, it is said, that the sluggard turnes himselfe upon his bed, as the doore doth upon the hinges. That is, he keepeth his bed as if he were fastned to it. Prov. 26. 14.

And because the Spirit will abound in this point, it is further written of the sloathfull man, that hee saith, An huge Lyon is in the way: I shall bee slaine in the streets: That is, when any good matter is in hand (as preaching, praying, reading, giving to the poore, &c.) then he draweth backe, hee shrinketh into the shell, hee findeth one let or other, one excuse or other. Then profit and pleasure, busines and idlenesse, matters at home, and matters abroad, company, and a thousand occasions, will lye in his way, as so many Lyons, to let and hinder him. So then wee see how lively and plentifully the holy Scriptures doe paint out the lazie lubbers of this world, and sonnes of idlenesse: which are as hardly drawne to any good thing as a Beare to the stake. As for the duties of Religion, they go as lively and as cheerefully about them, as a theefe goeth up the ladder to be executed for his theft. Prov. 26. 13.

Phil. I doe plainely see, that this sinne of idlenesse is a very grosse evill, and the root of many vices: yet for all that, there

there be a great number which thinke they were born to live idlely; as many young Gentlemen, and such like: which imagine they came into the world for no other purpose, but to hunt and hawke, card and dice, riot and revell; and so spend their dayes in pleasure & vanity. Againe, there be many lazie lozels, and luskish youths, both in towns and villages, which doe nothing all the day long but walk in the streets, sit upon the stalles, and frequent Taverns and Ale-houses. Many rich citizens, especially women, doe ordinarily lye in bed till nine of the clocke, and then forsooth rise, and make themselves ready to goe to dinner. And after they have well dined, they spend the rest of the day, and a good part of the night also, in playing, prattling, babling, cackling, prating and gossipping; fie on this idle life. Many profane serving-men also doe falsly suppose, that they were borne only to game, riot, swear whore, ruffle it and roist it out, and to spend their time in meer idleneſſe. But, of all these well said the Heathen Philosopher, *Illos pariter indignantur & dii & homines, quisquis otiosus:* Both God and men do hate the idle person.

Aristot.

Theol. **It is a lamentable thing, to see so many men and women live so idlely, and so unprofitably as they do. For alas, there be too many which follow**

follow no honeſt calling, liue to no uſe; no body is the better for them. They doe no good, neither to the Church or common-wealth. They are like Drone-Bees: they are unprofitable burthens of the earth. God hath no uſe of them; the Church no good; the Common-wealth no benefit; their neighbours no profit; the poore no releefe. They imagine they came into the world to doe nothing but eat, drinke, and ſleep, and riſe up to play. They thinke they ſhould ſpend their time in dicing and dancing, in whore-dome and bravery, in gluttony and belly-cheere, in maſking themſelves like Hogges of Epicurus Heard, in pampering their panches, and cramming their bellies: in fatting themſelves like Boares in a Franke, till they bee well brawned; and (as Job ſaith) till their bones run full of marrow, their faces ſtrout with fatneſſe, and they have collops in their flanke. Oh, what a beaſtly life is this! Fie upon it, fie upon it. It is more meet for Epicures than Chriſtians; for ſwine than for men; for Sardanapalus and Heliogabalus, and ſuch like belly-gods, than for the profeſſors of the Goſpel. But of all ſuch Job ſaith enough; They ſpend their dayes in pleaſure, and ſuddenly go downe to hell.

Iob.15.27. & 21.21.

Iob.11.

Phil. But may it not be allowed unto Lords

Lords and Ladies, Gentlemen and Gentlewomen, and other great ones, to live idlely, sith they have wherewith to maintaine it?

Theol. God doth allow none to live idlely: but all, great and small, are to be employed one way or other: either for the benefit of the Church or Common-wealth; or for the good government of their owne houlholds; or for the good of townes and parishes, and those amongst whom they doe converse; or for the succour and relieve of the poore; or for the furtherance of the Gospel, and the maintenance of the ministery; or for one good use or other. To these ends, our wits, our learning, our reading, our skill, our policy, our wealth, our health, our wisedome, and authority, are to bee referred: knowing this, that one day wee shall come to give an account of our Bailywick, and to bee reckoned withall for the employments of our Talents. For this cause Job saith, that Man is borne to travell, as the sparks flie upward. And God hath laid this upon Adam and all his posterity, In the sweat of thy browes thou shalt eat thy bread. Some do set downe foure causes why every man should labour diligently in his calling.

Iob 5.7.

Gen.3.

First, to beare the yoke laid upon all mankind by the Lord.

Secondly,

Secondly, to get the necessaries of this life.

Thirdly, to live to the profit of humane society.

Lastly to avoid evill thoughts and actions.

S. Paul findeth great fault with some in the Church of Thessalonica, because they walked inordinately, that is, idely, and out of a lawfull calling; and therefore concluded, That such as would not labour, should not eat. So then, wee doe plainely see, that God alloweth idlenesse in none. For, when we are idle (as hath been shewed before) we lie open to the Divell and his temptations, and he gets within us, and prevaileth against us. While David tarryed idely at home in the beginning of the yeare, when Kings used to goe forth to the battell, hee was soone overtaken with those two foule sinnes of adultery and manslaughter. So long as Samson warred with the Philistines, hee could never bee taken or overcome: but after hee gave himselfe to idlenesse and pleasure, hee not onely committed fornication with the Strumpet Dalilah, but also was taken of his enemies, & his eyes miserably pulled out. These examples doe shew what a dangerous sinne idlenesse is. Therefore the holy Ghost sends us to schoole to the little Creature,

Creature, the Ant, to learne of her both to avoid idleneſſe, and alſo to uſe wiſedome and providence in our actions. Prov. 6. 6. Goe to the Piſmire, O ſluggard, behold her wayes, and bee wiſe: For ſhee, having no guide, task-maſter, nor ruler, prepareth her meat in the ſummer, and gathereth her food in the harveſt. And in good ſooth it is wonderfull to obſerve, what infinite paines, and unwearied labour, this filly creature taketh in Summer, that ſhe may bee well provided for againſt Winter. Let us therefore learne wiſedome from her example: and let us ſet before our eyes the looking-glaſſe of all Creatures. Let us conſider how the birds flye, the fiſhes ſwimme, the wormes creep, the heavens turne, the elements move, the ſea ebbeth and floweth inceſſantly: yea the earth it ſelfe, which is the moſt heavie and unweldy creature of all other, yet never ceaſeth his working, bringeth forth his burden in Summer, and labouring inwardly all the Winter, in concocting, and digeſting his nouriſhment for the next ſpring. Thus wee ſee how all creatures are diligently and painfully exerciſed in their kinds. And therefore it is a great ſhame for us to live idlely, carelelly, and diſſolutely. Let us therefore learne once (at laſt) to flie ſloath, and every one to live faithfully, diligently,

diligently, and industriously in our severall callings. So shall wee both keepe Satan at the staves end, and also much sinne out of our soules, which otherwise idlenesse will force in upon us.

Phil. I must needs confesse that idlenesse is a grosse vice, in whomsoever it is found. But specially, in my judgement, it is most odious in Magistrates and Ministers.

Theol. That is so in truth. For they ought to bee the guides, governours, shepheards, and watch-men over the people of God. And therefore for them to neglect their duties and charges, is a most horrible thing, sith it concerneth the hurt of many. Therefore well said the Heathen Poet, A Magistrate or Minister may not be lazie or sloathfull, to whom the nursing of the people is given in charge, and of whom many things are to be cared for. Homil. 2.

What a lamentable thing therefore is it, when Magistrates are prophane, irreligious, popish, vicious, and negligent in the duties of their calling? And how much more lamentable is it, when Ministers neglect their studies, slacke preaching and prayer, and give up themselves, some to covetousnesse, some to pride, some to husbandry, some to other worldly affaires, and some to spend their time idely in Ta-

berns, Ale-houses, gaming, rioting, and lewd company? Would to God therefore that both these kindes of publike persons would cast off idlenesse and sloath, and with diligence, faithfulnesse, care and conscience, performe the duties of their places. For it is an excellent thing for any to bee a good man in his place: As a good Magistrate that ruleth well, that governeth wisely, which favoureth good men, and good causes, and defendeth them: which also setteth himselfe against, bad men and bad causes, and punisheth them sharply and severely: which moreover maintaineth vertue, even of a very love hee beareth unto it in his heart: and punisheth vice, of a very zeale and hatred against it: and not for his credit onely or to please some, or because hee must needs doe it, and can doe no lesse, or for any such sinister respect: but even of a love to God, a care of his glory, a conscience of duty, and a fervent zeale against sin. So likewise, it is a notable thing for a Minister to bee a good man in his place: to bee studious in the Law of God, diligent and painefull in preaching, and that out of a love of God, a zeale of his glory, deep pity and compassion toward the soules of the people, seeking by all meanes possible to win them unto God, carrying himselfe

feite in all his actions amongſt them, wiſely, religiouſly, unblameably, and inoffenſively. So againe, it is a worthy thing to be a good rich man which doth much good with his riches, which keepeth a good houſe, relieveth the poore, miniſtreth to the neceſſities of the Saints, and giveth cheerfully and with diſcretion, where need is. So alſo, it is a commendable thing to bee a good neighbour, a good Townſman, by whom a man may live quietly, peaceably, joyfully, and comfortably.

And laſtly, to bee a good poore man: that is, humble, lowly, dutifull, painefull, ready to help, and ready to pleaſe. Oh, I ſay, this is a moſt excellent and glorious thing, when every man keepeth his ſtanding, his range, and his ranke; when all men, with care and conſcience, performe the duties of their places: when the husband doth the duty of an husband; and the wife, of a wife: when the father doth the duty of a father; and the child, of a childe: when the Maſter doth the duty of a Maſter; and the ſervant, of a ſervant: when every man ſetteth God before his eyes, in doing thoſe things which eſpecially belong unto him. For herein conſiſteth the honour of God, the glory of the Prince, the crowne of the Church, the fortreſſe of the Common-weale, the ſafety of

Cities the strength of Kingdoms, and the very preservation of all things.

Asm. You have said well in some things, but yet I doe not see, but that rich men and women may live idlely, sith they have enough wherewithall to maintaine it. For may not a man do with his owne what he list?

Theol. Verily. For you may not take your owne knife, and cut your owne throat with it: neither may you take your owne axe, and kill your owne childe with it. Therefore that reason is naught. Albeit therefore wealthy men and women have great plenty of all things, so as they need not labour, yet let them be profitably employed some way or other; let them exercise themselves in one good thing or other. If they can find nothing to doe, let them give themselves much to private prayers, and reading of the Scriptures, that they may be able to instruct and exhort others. Or else let Ladies and Gentlewomen doe as that good woman Dorcas did, that is, buy cloath, cut it out, worke it, sew it, make shirts, smocks, coats and garments, and give them to the poore, when they have so done. For it is said of Dorcas, that she was a woman full of good workes, and almes-deeds which she did. She was a mercifull and tender hearted woman, she was the

Act. 9. 36. 39

poore

poore mans friend, she cloathed the poore and naked, she knew it was a sacrifice acceptable to God. Oh that the wealthy women of our Land would follow the example of Dorcas! But (alas) these dayes bring forth few Dorcases.

Phil. As you have shewed us the causes of the former evils: so now, I pray you, shew the causes of this also.

Causes of idlenesse.

Theol. The causes of idlenesse are,
Evill examples.
Bad education.
Living out of calling.

Remedies against idlenesse.

Phil. Shew us also the remedies.

Theol. The remedies are,
Good education.
Labour in youth.
Good examples.
Diligence in a lawfull calling.

Phil. Now then let us come to the last signe of damnation, which is oppression. And I beseech you, good Sir, speake your mind of it out of the Scriptures.

Theol. It is so infinite a matter, that I know not where to begin, or where to make an end of it. It is a bottomelesse sinke of most grievous enormities. I shall enter into a Labyrinth, where I shall not know how to get out againe. But sith you are desirous to heare something of it, this I say, that it is a most cruell monster, a bloudy vice, a most ugly and

hideous fiend of hell. The Scripture in very many places doe cry out upon it, arraigning it, adjudging it, and condemning it downe to hell. They doe also thunder and lighten upon all those which are stained and corrupted with this vice, calling them by such names, and giving them such titles, as are taken from the effects of this sin, and most fit for oppression: as

Esay 3.15. Amos 8.6. Micah 3.2. namely, that They grinde the faces of the poore; that, They plucke off their skinnes from them, and their flesh from their bones? that, They eat them up, as they eat bread. These are they

Psal.14.4. which strive to devour all (like savage beasts) and to get the whole earth into their hands, either by hook or by crooke, by right or by wrong; by oppression, fraud, and violence. These Caterpillers & Commorants of the earth, are like unto the whale fish, that swalloweth up quick other little fishes. They are like a Lyon that devoureth other beasts. They are like the Falcon, which seizeth, plumeth, and preyeth upon other fowles. These greedy wolves devoure all, and swallow up the pooze of the Land. Therefore the Prophets of God doe thunder out many great woes against them.

First, the Prophet Esay sayth, ca. 5. 8. Woe unto them that joyne house to

house,

house, and field to field, till there be no place for the poore to dwell in, that they may be placed by themselves in the midst of the earth.

Secondly, the Prophet Jeremy **saith,** Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousenesse, and his chambers without equity. Ier. 22. 13.

Thirdly, the Prophet Micah **saith,** Woe unto them that covet fields, and take them by violence; and so oppresse a man and his house, even a man and his heritage. Mich. 2. 2.

Fourthly, the Prophet Habbacuk **crieth out, saying** Woe unto him that buildeth a Towne with bloud, and erecteth a City by iniquity. St. James **also most terribly threatneth these kinde of men, saying,** Goe to now, yee rich men, weepe and howle for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your gold and silver is cankered: and the rust of them shall be a witnesse against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Hab. 2. 12. Iames 5. 1, 2

Lastly, St. Paul **saith flatly, that** Extortioners shall not inherit the Kingdome of God. **Thus wee see, how many fearfull woes and threats are denounced from heaven against the pestilent cut-throats of the earth.** 1 Cor. 6. 10.

Phil. And all little enough. For they are steeped in their sinne, and the staine of it is so soked into them, as it will hardly ever be washed out. True

it is that you ſaid, that theſe cruell oppreſſing bloud-ſuckers are the moſt pernicious and peſtilent vermine that creep upon the face of the earth; and yet I thinke there were never moe of them than in theſe dayes. For now the wicked world is full of ſuch as doe ſundry wayes bite, pinch, & nip the poore, as we ſee by every dayes lamentable experience. But you can ſpeak more of it than I: therefore, I pray you, lay open the ſundry kinds of oppreſſion uſed in theſe daies.

The ſundry kinds of oppreſſions

The. There is oppreſſion by uſury.
Oppreſſion by bribery.
Oppreſſion by racking of Rents.
Oppreſſion by taking excellive fines.
Oppreſſion in bargaining.
Oppreſſion in letting of leaſes.
Oppreſſion in letting of houſes.
Oppreſſion in letting of grounds.
Oppreſſion in binding poore men to unreaſonable covenants.
Oppreſſion in thruſting poore men out their houſes.
Oppreſſion in hiring poore mens houſes over their heads.
Oppreſſion in taking of fees.
Oppreſſion by Lawyers.
Oppreſſion by Church officers.
Oppreſſion by engroſſers.
Oppreſſion by foreſtallers.
Oppreſſion of the Church.

Oppreſſion of the Miniſtery.
Oppreſſion of the poore.
Oppreſſion of widowes.
Oppreſſion of Orphans.

And thus we ſee how all ſwarmes with Oppreſſions; and nothing but Oppreſſions, Oppreſſions

Phil. In truth, this is a moſt cruell and oppreſſing age wherein wee live; yea, a very iron age. It ſeemes that the great ones minde nothing elſe: they are altogether ſet upon oppreſſion: they dote and dreame of it: they finde ſweet in it, and therefore they are mad of it: As Solomon ſaith, Oppreſſion maketh a wiſe man mad. It ſeemes therfore, that this vice is of ſuch marvellous force, that it can bereave men of their wits, and make them ſtarke mad of getting goods by hook or by crooke, they care not how, nor from whom, ſo they have it. Yet no doubt the moſt wiſe God hath enacted many good lawes for the ſuppreſſing of this evill, and threatneth the execution of them in his owne perſon: and eſpecially his law doth provide for the ſafety of the poor, the fatherleſs, the widow and the ſtranger. But you, M. *Theologus*, can repeat the Statutes better than I, becauſe you are a profeſſed Divine: therefore, I pray you, let us hear them from you.

Theol. **In the 22. chapter of** Exodus, **God made this Law following,** You

shalt not trouble any widow or fatherlesse child: If thou vex or trouble such, and so hee call and cry unto mee, I will surely heare his cry. Then shall my wrath bee kindled, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widowes, and your children fatherlesse. Deut.22. **Againe he saith,** Thou shalt not oppresse an hired servant that is needy and poore: but thou shalt give him his hire for his day; neither shall the Sun goe downe upon it (for he is poore, and therewith sustaineth his life) lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it bee sinne unto thee. Exod.22. **Moreover, the Lord saith,** Thou shalt doe no injurie to a stranger: for yee were strangers in the land of Egypt. Mal.3. **And God himselfe threatneth, that hee will bee a swift witnesse against those which keepe backe the hirelings wages, and vex the widow and the fatherlesse.** 1 Thes.4.6. **The Apostle saith,** Let no man oppresse or defraud his brother in any matter. For the Lord is an avenger of all such things. Eccl.5.6. **Solomon also saith.** If in a country thou seest the oppression of the poore, and the defrauding of justice and judgement; be not astonied at the matter: for hee that is higher than the highest, regardeth, and there be higher than they. **All these holy Statutes and Lawes, enacted and provided against oppressors, doe plainely shew**

what

what care the Lord hath for his poore, distressed, and desolate people.

Phil. But these oppressing hel hounds are such as care for nothing. No law of the Almighty can bridle them: nothing can feare them: nothing can restraine them: they have made a covenant with hell and death. They are frozen in their dregges, they are past feeling. And as Job saith, These are they that abhorre the light: they know not the wayes thereof, neither continue in the paths thereof. Their hearts are as hard as the Adamant. Nothing can move them, nothing can worke upon them. There is great crying out every where of the stone in the reines, which indeed is a great torment to the body: but there is no complaining of the stone in the heart, I meane, a stony heart, which is the soreſt disease that possibly can fall into the soule of a man: and yet in these times it groweth very rife. For mens hearts are as hard as brasse, and as the neather Milstone, as the Scripture speaketh. For many, especially of these unmercifull and oppressing tyrants, say in their hearts, God will doe neither good nor evill. Therefore they put the evill day far from them, and approach to the seat of iniquity. They are at ease in Sion: they lie upon beds of Ivorie, and stretch themselves on their beds, and eat the Lambes of the flock, and

[Iob 24.14.]

[Zeph. 1.13.]

and the calves out of the ſtall. They ſing
Amos 6.3,9 to the ſound of the Viol: they invent inſtruments of muſick, like David: they drink wine in bowles, & no man is ſorry for the affliction of Joſeph, that is, the troubles of Gods people. The Prophet Eſay alſo complaines of theſe kind of
Eſay 5.12. men, ſaying, They regard not the work of the Lord, neither conſider the work of his hands. And another Prophet
Pſal.10.11. ſaith, They ſay in their hearts, God hath forgot, he hides away his face and will never ſee. They are ſo proud, that they ſeek not for God. They thinke alwayes there is no God: his Judgements are farre out of their ſight, their wayes alway proſper, and therefore they ſay in their hearts, Tuſh, wee ſhall never bee moved, nor come in danger.

Theol. **You haue ſpoken very well touching the ſteelineſſe and hardneſſe of theſe mens hearts, who are ſo unmercifull to their poore neighbours that almoſt none can liue by them. They doe ſo diſturb and diſquiet all things, that poore men can dwell in no reſt by them. Therefore truly ſaith the wiſe King,** A mighty man moleſteth all, & both hireth the foole & hires thoſe that paſſe by: but the poore man ſpeaketh with prayers; **That is, by the way of entreaty and ſupplications. For the poore are afraid of them: they quake when they ſee them, as the beaſts**

beasts quake at the roaring of a Lion. Many poore Farmers, poore Husbandmen, poore Heards, poore Labourers, poore Widowes & Hirelings, doe quake and tremble when these greedy Wolves come abroad, And (as Job saith) The poore of the earth hide themselves together. For (alas! in their hearts they cannot abide the sight of them) they had as leeve meet the divell as meet them, for fear of one displeasure or another. For either they feare that they will warne them out of their houses, or parley about more Rent, and straighter covenants, or begge away their best kine, or borrow their horses, or command their carts, or require a weeks worke of them, & never pay them for it, or a twelvemonths pasture for a couple of Geldings, or that they'le make one quarrell or another unto them, one mischiefe or another. So that these poor soules cannot tell what to doe, or which way to turne them, for fear of these cruell Termagants. They are even weary of their lives. For they have no remedy for these things, but even to beare it off with head and shoulders. Therefore they often wish they were out of the world, and that they were buried quick. They say, if any will knock them on the head, they will forgive him. O most piteous case! Iob 24.4.

O lamentable hearing! These poore silly creatures are faine to drudge and moile all the yeare long, in Winter and Summer, in Frost and Snow, in heat and cold, to provide their rents, that they may bee able to pay their cruell land lord at his day. For else how shall they bee able to looke him in the face? Yet their rent is so rack'd, that all they can doe is little enough to pay it; and when that is paid (alas) the poore man, and his wife and children have little left to take to, or to maintaine themselves withall: they are faine to gnaw of a crust, so fare hardly, and goe thinly clad. Sometimes they have victuals, and sometimes none. The poore children cry for bread. Poore widows also, and poore fatherlesse children are found weeping and mourning in their houses, and in their streets. So that now wee may, with Eccl. 4. 1. Solomon, Turne and consider all the oppressions that are wrought under the Sunne. We may behold the teares of the oppressed, and none comforteth them. For the mighty ones do wrong the weaker, even as the stronger beasts do push and harme the feebler. These griping oppressors doe pinch the poore even to the quick. They pluck away from the fatherlesse and widows that little which they have. If there be but a cow, or a few sheep left, they

they will have them. If there be a little commodity of house or land; oh what devices they have to win it in, and to wring it away! These tyrants will goe as nigh as the bed they lye upon. They know well enough, the poore men are not able to wage law with them: and therefore they may doe what wrong they will, and shew what cruelty they list. Hence come the teares of the oppressed: hence commeth the weeping and wailing of the poore. But alas, poore soules! they may well weep to ease their hearts a little, but there is none to comfort them: remedy they can have none. But yet, assuredly, the everlasting God doth look upon them, and will be revenged. For the cryes of the poore, the fatherlesse, and the widowes, have entred into the eares of the Lord of Hosts, who is an avenger of all such things; yea, a strong revenger, as Solomon saith, Enter not into the field of the fatherles: for their revenger is strong: hee himselfe will plead their cause against thee. And againe he saith, Rob not the poore, because he is poore: neither tread downe the afflicted in the gate: for the Lord pleadeth their cause, and will spoile their soule that spoile them. Now see then, that the most just God will bee revenged of these unmercifull tyrants.

Prov. 23. 14.

Prov. 22. 6.

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Hee will not alwayes put up these wrongs and injuries done to the poore.

In the eighth chapter of the Prophet Amos, he sweares by the excellency of Jacob, that he will never forget any of their works. And againe he saith by his Prophet Jeremy, Shall I not be avenged on such a nation as this?

Surely hee will set his face against them to root them out of the earth. For indeed they are not worthy to crawle upon the face of the earth, or to draw breath among the sonnes of men. It is written in the booke of Psalmes, that God will set these fellowes opposite against him, as a Butt to shoot at: that hee will put them apart, and the strings of his bow shall hee make ready against their faces. Be astonished at this, O ye heavens, and tremble, O thou earth. Heare this, O yee cruell land-lords, unmercifull oppressors, and bloud-suckers of the earth. You may well bee called bloud-suckers: for you sucke the bloud of many poore men, women and children: you eat it, you drink it, you have it served in at your sumptuous tables every day, you swallow it up and live by it. And as Job saith, The wildernesse gives you and your children food: that is, you live by robbing and murdering. But woe, woe unto you that ever you were borne. For the bloud of

Psal. 21. 12.

Iob 24. 5.

of the oppressed, which yee have eaten and drunken, shall one day cry for speedy vengeance against you; as the blood of Abel cryed against Cain. Their blood shall witnesse against you in the day of judgement: and the teares of many poore starved children, orphans and widowes, shall cry out against you. Was the Lord revenged of Ahab for his cruell and unjust dealing with poore Naboth, and shall hee not bee revenged of you? Did the Dogges lap the blood of Ahab, and shall you escape? No, no: you shall not escape. The Lord will be a swift witnesse against you, as hee saith in Malachie. Was the Lord angry with the rich of the people for oppressing the poore (so as the cry of the people, and of their wives, against their oppressours, was heard of the Almighty) and do you thinke you shall escape scot-free? Doth not the like cause bring forth the like effect? the like sin, the like punishment? Know therefore for certainty, that the Lord hath coffers full of vengeance against you, and one day hee will unlock them, and bring them forth into the sight of all men. 1 King. 21. Mal. 3. Neh. 5.

Know also that the timber of your houses, and the stones of your walls, which you have built by oppression and blood, shall cry against you in the

day of the Lords wrath, as the Prophet Habbacuk telleth you. The stone (saith hee) shall cry out of the wall, and the beame out of the timber shall answer it. where the Prophet telleth you, that the walls of your houses built in bloud, shall cry out loud and shrill, and play the Chorristers in that behalfe, so as they shall answer one another, on either side. The one side singeth, Behold bloud: the other, Behold murder. The one side, Behold deceit; the other, behold cruelty. The one, behold pilling and polling, the other, Behold covetousnesse. The one, Behold robbery, the other, Behold perjury. And thus you see how the stones and timber of your houses shall descant upon you. And howsoever you put on your brazen browes, and harden your hearts against these threatnings of the most terrible God and Lord of hoasts; yet one day you shall (spite of your hearts, will yee, nill ye) be brought forth into judgement: you shall once come to your reckoning; you shall at last be apprehended, contented, and arraigned at the barre of Gods tribunall seat, before the great Judge of all the world. Then sentence shall passe against you, even that most dreadfull sentence, Go yee cursed into hell fire, there to bee tormented with the divell and his Angels

Hab. 2.

Mat. 25.

gels for ever. **O then, woo, woo unto you:** For what shall it profit a man to winne the whole world, and lose his owne soule? **saith our Lord Jesus.** Surely, even as much, as if one should win a farthing, and lose an hundred thousand pound. For if hee shall bee cast into hell fire; which hath not given of his owne goods righteously gotten, as our Saviour avoucheth; where then shall hee bee cast, that hath stollen other mens goods? And if hee shall bee damned that hath not clothed the naked, what shall become of him that hath made naked them that were clothed? Oh, therefore repent in time, O yee cruell oppressors: seek the Lord while he may be found: call upon him while he is neere: lay aside your savage cruelty: visit the fatherlesse and widow in their distresse: deal your bread to the hungry: helpe them to their right which suffer wrong: deal mercifully with your tenants: Rack not your rents any more: pinch not the poore soules for whom Christ died; pitty them, I say, but pinch them not: deal kindly and friendly with them: remember your great accounts: consider the shortnesse of your dayes, and the vanity of your life: rent your hearts, and not your cloathes. Turn unto the Lord with all your heart, with weeping, fasting, and mourning: rvebent Mat. 16.

pacifie Gods wrath with a sacrifice of teares: pacifie his anger with the calves of your lips, and with a contrits spirit: bee grieved for that which is past, and amend that which is to come; stand it out no more at the swords point against God: for it will not boot you to strive; hee is too strong for you. Your onely wisedome is to come-in. Come-in therefore, come-in, yee rebellious generation: submit your selves to the great King: humble your selves under his mighty hand: cast downe your swords and targets: yeeld unto our God. So shall you escape the vengeance to come: so shall God accept you, have mercy upon you, receive you to favour, grant you a generall pardon for all your rebellions, and admit you into the number of his faithfull and loyall subjects.

Phil. I conceive by divers speeches which you have alledged, that goods got by oppression and cruelty, will never prosper long. For oppressors coine their money upon their neighbours skinnes. How then can it be blessed?

Theol. You have spoken a truth, for, as it hath beene shewed before, that those goods which are got by swearing and lying, are cursed; so all these that are got by oppression and violence, are more cursed. Therefore

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the Lord saith by his Prophet Jeremy, As the Partridge gathers the young which she hath not brought forth: so hee that gathers riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his dayes; and at his end shall bee a foole, and his name shall be written in the earth. Ier. 17. 11.

Phil. Would to God our Magistrates and Governours would take speedy order for the remedying of these things, and for the redressing of such grievous enormities as are among us; or that they themselves would step in; and deliver the oppressed from the hand of the oppressor.

Theol. Job **was an excellent man for such matters. For, it is said of him, that** Hee brake the jawes of the unrighteous man, and pluckt the prey out of his teeth. Iob 29. 17. **Where wee see how** Job **was a meanes to deliver the innocent, and to pull the Lambe out of the Lions clawes. Moreover, it is written of him in the same Chapter, that the blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon him, and that hee caused the widowes heart to rejoyce; that he was the eye to the blind, the feet to the lame, and the father to the poore: and when hee knew not the cause, hee sought it out diligently. O what a notable man was this! O that wee had many** Iobs **in these dates.** Iob 29. 25.

wise

wise Salomon doth most gravely advise us all to follow Jobs example in this behalfe. Deliver (saith hee) them that are oppressed and drawn to death: for shouldest thou withdraw thy selfe from them which goe downe to the slaughter? would to God this counsell were well weighed and practised amongst us.

Prov. 14. 12.

Phil. I marvell much with what face these cruell oppressors can come before God in his holy Temple, to pray, and offer up their sacrifices unto him. For we see, many of them, though they have such foule hands, and foule hearts, as wee have heard; yet for all that, will most impudently presume to come to the Church and pray: or at least, when they are laid in their beds a nights, and halfe asleepe, then will they mumble over their prayers, or bee pattering some Pater-nosters.

Theol. Alas, alas, poore soules! all that they doe in matters of Gods worship, is but hypocrisie and dissimulation. For in truth they are not for God: they love him but from the teeth outward: their mouthes are with him, but their heart goes after covetousnesse, and their hands are full of blood. And therefore God doth both abhorre them and their prayers. For, saith he, Though they stretch out their hands, yet will I hide mine eyes from

Esay 1. 15.

from them: and though they make many prayers, yet will I not heare them. For their hands are full of bloud.

Moreover the holy Ghost saith, He that turnes away his care from hearing the Law, even his prayer is abominable. David **saith,** If I regard wickednesse in my heart, God will not heare my prayer. **Our Lord Jesus also affirmeth, that** God heares not sinners, **that is, stubborne and careleſſe sinners. So then wee may clearely see (by all these testimonies of holy writ) what account God makes of the prayers of oppressors, and all other prophane and ungodly men: namely, that he doth hate them, and abhorre them as loathsome and odious in his sight.**

Prov. 28. 9.

Psal. 66. 18.

Ioh. 9. 31.

Phil. Now in conclusion, shew us the causes of oppression.

Theol. **The causes are these:**

Cruelty.
Covetousnesse.
Hard-heartednesse.
An evill conscience.
The Divell.

Causes of oppression.

Phil. Let us heare also the remedies.

Phil. **The remedies be these:**

Pity.
Contentation.
Tender affections.
A good conscience.
Much prayer.

Remedies of oppression.

Phil. Now, Sir, you have at large uttered

tered your minde concerning these grosse corruptions of the world, and have plainely and evidently proved them to bee the deadly poyson of the soule: so also, I pray you, satisfie us in this, whether they be not hurtfull also to the body, goods, and name.

Theol. I have dwelt the longer in these common vices of the world, because almost all sorts of men are stained with one or other of them: and therefore they can never be enough spoken against. For the whole world lyeth in them, as S. John testifieth. If men therefore could bee recovered of these diseases, no doubt there would bee a ready passage made for the abundance of grace, and wee should have a most flourishing Church and Common-wealth: but as long as these doe lie in the way, there is small hope of greater mercies and blessings to be powred upon us, or that ever we shall come to have an inward conversation with God. For these vices blind our eyes, burthen our hearts, & (as the Prophet Jeremy saith) hinder good things from us. But touching your petition, I must needs grant, that as these vices are the very bane of the soule, and most certaine signes of condemnation; so are they very dangerous to the body, goods and name: yea, and to the whole

1 Iohn 5.

Ier. 5. 25.

whole land, both Church and Common-wealth.

Phil. Shew us out of the Scriptures what danger they bring to the body.

Theol. The Lord our God saith, that if wee will not obey him, nor keep his commandements (but breake his covenant) hee will appoint over us hastie plagues, consumptions, and the burning ague, to consume the eyes, and to make the heart heavie. So also he saith, that if wee will not obey his voyce, to observe all his commandements and ordinances, that then hee will make the pestilence cleave unto us, untill he have consumed us; that hee will smite us with the Feaver, with the botch of Egypt, with the Emrods, with the Scab, and with the Itch; that also hee will smite us with madnesse, and with blindnesse, and with astonishment of heart. So then you see what great evills the Lord threatens to inflict upon our bodies in this life, for these and such like sinnes. But on the contrary, the holy Ghost saith, Feare God, and depart from evill: so health shall bee to thy navell, and moysture to thy bones. Levit. 26. 16. Levit. 28. 22. Prov. 3. 7.

Phil. What evill doe these forenamed sinnes bring upon us in our goods and outward estate?

Theol. They cause God to curse us

in all that we set hand unto, as plentifully appeareth in the forenamed chapter: where the Lord saith thus, If thou wilt not obey the commandements of the Lord thy God, cursed shalt thou be in the towne, cursed also in the field: cursed shall bee thy basket and thy store: cursed shall bee the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, and the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheepe. Cursed shalt thou bee when thou commest in, and cursed also when thou goest out. The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, trouble and shame, in all that thou setteſt thy hand unto. And further he saith, That hee will break the staffe of their bread; that ten women shall bake their bread in one oven, and they shall deliver their bread againe by weight, and they shall eat and not be satisfied. You doe therefore apparently see, that these sinnes will draw downe Gods wrath upon us, and all that we have.

Deut. 28.

Deut. 37.

Phil. What hurt doe these sinnes to our good name?

Theol. They bring reproach, shame, and infamy upon us, and cause us to bee abhorred and contemned of all good men. They doe utterly blot out our good name. For as vertue makes men honourable and reverend: so vice makes men vile and contemptible. This is set downe, where the Lord

Lord threatens Israel, that for their sins and disobedience he will make them a proverb and common talke, yea, a reproach & astonishment among all people. In sundry other places of the Prophets hee threatens, for their sinnes, to make them a reproach, a shame, an hissing, and nodding of the head to all Nations. 2 King. 9.7. Ezek. 5.5.

Phil. I doe verily thus think, that as sinne generally doth staine every mans good name, which all are chary and tender of: so especially it doth blot those which are in high places, and of speciall note for learning, wisdome and godlinesse.

Theol. You have spoken most truly, and agreeable to the Scriptures. For the Scripture saith, As a dead Flie causeth the Apothecaries oyntment to stinke; so doth a little folly, him that is in estimation for wisdome and for honour. Where Solomon sheweth, that if a Flie get into the Apothecaries box of oyntment, and die, and putrifie in it, shee marreth it though it bee never so precious: even so, if a little sin get into the heart, and breake out in the forehead of a man of great fame for some singular gifts, it will blurre him, though he be never so excellent. Eccles. 10.1

Phil. Shew me this, I pray you, more plainely.

Theol. Wee observe this, in all experience, that if a Noble-man bee a good man, and have many excellent parts in him of courtesie, patience, humility, and love of Religion; yet if he be covetous, the common people will have their eye altogether upon that: and they will say, Such a Noble-man is a very good man, but for one thing: hee is exceeding covetous, oppresseth poore men, and dealeth hardly with his Tenants, keepeth no house, doth little good in the Countrey where he dwelleth. And this is it that marreth all.

Moreover, let a Judge, a Justice, or a Magistrate, bee endued with excellent gifts of prudence, policy, temperance, liberality, and knowledge in the law: yet if they be given to anger, or taking of bribes, oh how it will disgrace them amongst the people! for they will say, He is a worthy man indeed, but there is one thing in him that marreth all: hee is an exceeding angry and furious man, hee is as angry as a waspe, he will be in a pelting chafe for every trifle: hee will fret and fume, if you doe but blow upon him. And besides this, he is a very corrupt man: he is a great taker of bribes: he loveth well to be bribed: he will doe any thing for bribes.

Furthermore, if any Preacher be a man

man of great gifts, the common people will say of him: Oh, he is a worthy man indeed, an excellent Scholar, a profound Divine, a singular man in a Pulpit; but yet for all that, he hath a lhewd touch which marreth all; hee is an exceeding proud man: hee is as proud as Lucifer. He hath very great gifts indeed, but I warrant you hee knoweth it well enough: for hee carrieth his crest very high, and looketh very sternly and disdainefully upon all other men. He is unmeasurably puft up with overweening, and thinketh that hee toucheth the clouds with his head. Thus therefore we see, how the dead Flies marre all, and how some one sinne doth disgrace a man that otherwise doth excell.

Phil. What is the cause why some one sin doth so blot and smut the most excellent men?

Theol. The reason hereof is, because such men are as a candle set upon a candlestick, or rather upon a scaffold or mountaine, for all men to behold and looke upon. And sure it is, they have a thousand eyes upon them every day; and that not onely gazing upon them, but also prying very narrowly into them, to spie out the least mote, that they may make a mountaine of it. For as in a cleane

white paper, one little spot is soone espyed; but in a piece of browne paper, twenty great blurres scant discerned: even so in Noble-men, Iudges, Magistrates, Iustices, Preachers and Professors, the least spot or speck is soone seene into; but among the baser sort, and most grosse livers, almost nothing is espied or regarded.

Phil. Sith the eyes of all men are bent and fixed upon such men as are of some note, therefore they had need very heedfully to looke to their steps, that they may take away all advantage from them that seeke it.

Theol. Yea verily. And furthermore, they had need to pray with David alwayes, Direct my steps, O Lord, in thy word; and let no iniquity have dominion over me. And againe, Order my goings, that my foot-steps slip not: uphold me in my integrity. For if such men bee never so little given to swearing, to lying, to drinke, or to women, it is espyed by and by: and therewithall their credit is cracked, their fame over-cast, their glory eclipsed, and the date of their good name presently expired.

Ps. 119. 13.

Psal. 41. 12.

Phil. Now as you have shewed what great hurt these sins do bring upon our soules, bodies goods and names: so also, I pray you, shew what danger they bring upon the whole Land.

Theol.

Theol. Questionlesse, they pull downe the wrath of God upon us all, and give him just cause to break all in pieces, and utterly to subvert and overthrow the good estate both of Church and Common-wealth; yea, to make a finall consumption and desolation of all. For they be the very fire-brands of Gods wrath, and, as it were, touch-wood to kindle his anger and indignation upon us. For the Apostle saith, For such things commeth the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Col. 3. 6.

Phil. Declare unto us out of the Scriptures, how the Lord in former times hath punished whole nations and Kingdomes for these and such like sins.

Theol. In the fourth of Hosea, the Lord telleth his people, that hee hath a controversie with the Inhabitants of the Land (and the reason is added) because there was no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the Land. By swearing, lying, killing, stealing, and whooring, they breake out, and bloud toucheth bloud. Therefore shall the Land mourn: and every one that dwelleth therein shall be cut off. Hos 4. 2

Here then wee see what it is that will incense God against us, and cause us all to mourne. So likewise the Lord threatneth by his Prophet Amos, that for the cruelty and oppres-

sion of the poore, he would plague the whole Land. Shall not the Land tremble for this (saith the Lord) and every one mourne that dwels therein?

Amos 3.8.

Againe, the Lord saith by the Prophet Jeremy, Doe they provoke me to anger, and not themselves, to the confusion of their owne faces? Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, mine anger and my wrath shall be poured upon this place, upon man and beast, upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground: and it shall burne, and not be quenched.

Ier. 7. 19, 20

Againe, the Lord saith; If yee will not heare these words, I sweare by my selfe (saith the Lord) that this house shall bee waste, and I will prepare destroyers against thee, every one with his weapons, and they shall cut downe thy chiefe Cedar-trees, and cast them into the fire.

Ier. 22. 5.

Likewise the Lord threatneth by his Prophet Ezekiel, saying: Because you have not walked in my statutes, nor kept my judgements: therefore behold, I, even I, come against thee, and will execute judgement in the midst of thee, even in the sight of the Nations: and I will doe in thee, that I never did before, neither will I doe any more the like, because of all thine abominations. For in the midst of thee, the fathers shall eat their sons, and

Ezek. 5. 7.

and the sons shall eat their fathers. **Againe, by the same Prophet the Lord saith,** The Land is full of the Judgement of blood, and the City full of cruelty. Wherefore I will bring the most wicked of the heathen, and they shall possesse their houses. I will also make the pompe of the mighty to cease, and the holy places shall be defiled. When destruction commeth, they shall seeke peace, and not have it. Calamity shall come upon calamity, and rumour upon rumour. Then shall they seeke a vision of the Prophet: but the Law shall perish from the Priest, and counsell from the Ancient. The King shall mourne, and the Prince shall be clothed with desolation, and the hands of the people in the Land shall be troubled. I will doe unto them according unto their wayes, and according to their judgement I will judge them: and they shall know, that I am the Lord. **Last of all, the Lord saith by his Prophet** Jeremy, Heare, O earth: Behold, I will cause a plague to come upon this people, even the fruit of their owne imaginations, because they have not taken heed to my words and to my Law; but cast it off. Eze. 7. 23. 27

Ier. 4. 19.

Almost innumerable places to this purpose are to bee found in the writings of the Prophets: but these may suffice to prove the maine point;

to wit, that the iust God doth punish whole nations and kingdomes for the sinnes and rebellions thereof.

Phil. Sith all these sins (for the which the Lord did execute such universall punishments upon his owne people) doe abound and overflow in the Land, may wee not justly feare some great plague to fall upon us? And the rather, because our transgressions doe increase daily, and grow to a full height and ripenesse; so as it seemes, the harvest of Gods vengeance draweth neere and approacheth?

Theol. We may indeed justly feare and tremble. For if God spared not the Angels that sinned, how shall hee spare us? If he spared not his owne people, what can we looke for? If he spared not the naturall branches, how shall hee spare us that are wilde by nature? Are we better than they? Can we looke to be spared, when they are punished? Are not our sins as many, and as great as theirs? Doth not the same cause bring forth the same effect? Is the Arme of the Lord shortned? Or is not God the same iust God to punish sin now, that hee was then? Yes, yes assuredly. And therefore wee have great cause to mourne and lament, to quake and tremble, because there is a naked sword of vengeance hanging ober our heads.

heads. Thus did Jeremie, thus did Amos, thus did Habbacuk, when they plainely saw the imminent wrath of God approaching upon the people of Israel and Juda. Ier.4.19. Amos.5.6 Hab.3.16.

Phil. I thinke wee may the rather doubt and feare, because the punishment of these forenamed vices is neglected by the Magistrate. For commonly when they that beare the sword of Justice, doe not draw it out to punish notorious offenders and malefactors, the Lord himselfe will take the matter into his owne hands, and be revenged in his owne person: which is most dreadfull and dangerous. For, it is a fearefull thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Heb.10.31.

Theol. You have spoken a truth. For if those which are Gods deputies and vice gerents in the earth, doe their duties faithfully in punishing vice and maintaining vertue; in smiting the wicked, and favouring the godly: then assuredly evill shall bee taken out of Israel, Gods wrath prevented, and his judgements intercepted: as it is written, Phineas stood up and executed judgement, and the plague was stayed. But if they (for feare, favour, affection, gaine, flattery, bribery, or any other sinister respect) will bee too sparing and remisse in punishing of grosse offenders, and Psal.106.30.

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be rather ready to smite the righteous; then doe they exceedingly provoke Gods wrath against the Land and against themselves.

Phil. One thing I doe greatly lament; that there be either none at all, or very slender censures, either by the Civil, or Ecclesiasticall authority, for divers of these forenamed vices: as pride, covetousnesse, oppression, lying, idlenesse, swearing, &c.

Theol. It is a thing to be lamented indeed. For where do we see a proud man punished, a covetous man punished, an oppressor punished, a swearer punished, a lyer punished, an idle person punished? Now, because they know they cannot, or shall not be punished, therefore they are altogether hardened, and imboldened in their sins, as the wise man saith: Because sentence against an evill work is not executed speedily; therefore the hearts of the children of men are fully set in them to doe evill.

Phil. One thing I doe much muse at, wherein also I desire to be further satisfied, *viz.* what is the cause that under so godly a Prince, so many good lawes, and so much good preaching and teaching, there should notwithstanding be such an excesse and overflowing of sin in all estates?

Theol. The causes hereof are di-

verg

bers and manifold. But I will nominate foure especiall ones in my judgement: The first is, many naturall corruption: which is so strong, as almost nothing can bridle it. The second is, ill presidents, and externall provocations to evill. The third is, the want of teaching in many congregations in the Land: by reason whereof, many know not sinne to bee sin. The last reason is, the corruption and negligence of some such as are in authority.

Phil. Doth not this inundation and overflowing of sinne, with the impunity of the same, prognosticate great wrath against us?

Theol. Yes undoubtedly, as it hath in part beene shewed before. And there bee divers other praesages of wrath, though not of the same kinde: which are these;

Nine predictions, or fore-signes of wrath.

Unthankfulnesse for the Gospel.
The abuse of our long peace.
Our secret Idolatries.
Our generall security.
Our ripenesse in all sinne.
Our abuse of Gods mercy.
Our abuse of his long patience.
The coldnesse of Professors.
Our not profiting by former judgements: as pestilence, famine, death, and the shaking of the sword.

Phil.

Phil. This last I take to be a speciall token of approaching vengeance: that we have not profited by former warnings.

Theol. **True indeed. For it is an ordinarie thing with God, when men will not profit by milde corrections, and common punishments, then to lay greater upon them. And when a former trouble doth us no good, we are to feare a finall consuming trouble. For so we reade in the Prophecy** Hos.5.12. **of** Hosea, **that at the first** God was to Ephraim as a moth, and to Judah as rottennesse: **but afterward, when as they profited not by it, he was to** Ephraim as a Lyon, and to Judah as a Lyons whelp. **So the Lord saith in another place, that if they will not come in, and yeeld obedience at the first call of his wrath, then** he will punish them seven times more: **but if** Lev.26.18. **they continue in their stubbornesse,** Vers.21. **then hee threatneth to bring** seven times more plagues upon them, according to their sins. **If by all these they would not bee reformed, but walke** Verse 24. **stubbornely against him, then he threatneth** yet seven times more for Verse 28. their sinnes: **and the fourth time,** yet seven times more. **The proofe hereof we have in the Booke of the Judges: where we reade how the people of Israel for their sins were in subjection**

to

to the King of Aram Naharaim eight yeeres: afterward because they profited nothing by it, but returned to their old sins, therefore they served Eglon King of Moab eighteen yeares. After that againe, for their new sins and provocations, the Lord gave them up into the hands of Midian seven yeeres. After all this, for the renewing of their sins, the Lord sold them into the hands of the Philistims and the Ammonites, which did grievously vexe and oppresse them for the space of eighteen yeeres. Last of all wee reade, that when neither famine, nor pestilence could cause them to returne unto him, then he delivered them up to the sword of their enemies, and held them in bondage and captivity threescore and ten yeeres. After all this, when they were delivered out of captivity, and returned home safely to their owne Nation, and inioyed some good time of peace and rest, yet at last they fell to the renewing of their sins: and therefore the Lord plagued them most grievously, by the divided Greek Empire, even Magog and Egypt, Seleuciæ and Lagidæ; and that by the space almost of three hundred yeeres. And this is it that the Prophet Hosea did foretell, that the children of Israel should remaine many dayes without a King, and without a Prince, without

Iudg.3.8.

Iudg.3.

Iudg.6.1.

Iudg.10.7.

Ps.103.3.

Ezek.38.

Hos.3.4.

out an Offering, & without an Image, without an Ephod, and without a Teraphim.

Phil. You have very largely laid open this last token of vengeance: to wit, that God at the first doth but beat us upon the coat, but if we continue in sin, he will whip us on the bare skin: and if men will not yeeld at the first gentle stroakes, then he will strike harder, and harder, till he have broken our stout stomackes, and made our great hearts come downe. Therefore it is good yeelding at the first: for wee shall get nothing by our sturdinesse against him. Wee doe but cause him to double his stroakes, and strike us both side-long and overthwart: for he cannot endure that wee should gruntle against him with stubborne sullennesse. But now to the point. Sith there are so many presages and fore-signes of Gods wrath, I pray you shew what it is that stayeth the execution and very downefall of the same.

Theol. **The prayers and teares of the faithfull are the speciall meanes that stay the hand of God from striking of us. For the prayers of the righteous are of great force with him: even able to doe all things.** &c. James 5.11. **saith, that** the prayer of a righteous man availeth much, if it be fervent: **and bringeth the example of** Elias **to prove it.**

it. For, saith hee, though Elias was a man subject to the like passions that we be, yet was he able by his prayers both to open and shut the heavens. Abraham likewise prevailed so farre with God by his prayers for Sodome, that if there had beene but ten just men found in it, it had beene spared. The Almighty God saith by his Prophet, Though Moses and Samuel stood before mee, yet mine affection could not bee toward this people. Which doth plainely shew, that Moses and Samuel might have done much with him, had hee not beene so fully bent against his people for their sins as he was. So likewise hee saith in the Prophecy of Ezekiel, Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were amongst them, they should deliver but their owne soules by their righteousnesse. Which also sheweth, that if there had beene any possible entreating of him for the Land, these three men might have done it: but now he was resolutely determined to the contrary. In respect therefore that the zealous preachers, and true professors of the Gospel doe so much prevaile with God by their prayers, they are said to bee the defence and strength of Kingdoms and Countries of Churches and Common-wealths: as it is said of Eliah, that hee was the Chariot of Israel, and the horsemen

Gen. 18.

Ier. 15. 1.

Ezek. 14. 14.

2 King. 2. 12

men thereof. Elisha also was enthro-
2King.6.17 ned with a mountaine full of horses, and Chariots of fire. And sure it is that Eliah and Elisha are not onely the Chariots and Horsemen of Israel, but also by their prayers they doe cause God himselfe to be a wall of fire round about it: as the Lord saith by
Ezek.22.30 his Prophet; I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the Land; that I might not destroy it: but I found none. Which sheweth, that if there had beene but some few to have stood in the breach, he would have spared the whole land. This also appeareth more plainely in the Prophecie of Jeremie, where the Lord saith
Jer.5. thus: Run to and fro by the streets of Jerusalem; behold and enquire in the open places thereof, if ye can finde a man, or if there be any that executeth Judgement, and seeketh the truth: and I will spare it. Oh then marke and consider, what a man may doe: yea, what one man may doe: what an Abraham may do: what a Moses may doe: what an Eliah may doe: what a Daniel, what a Samuel, what a Job, what a Noah may do! Some one man (by reason of his high favour with the Eternall) is able sometimes to doe more for a land by his prayers and teares, than many prudent men

by

by their counsel, or valiant men by their swords. Yea, it doth evidently appeare (in the sacred volumne of the holy Ghost) that some one poore Preacher, being full of the Spirit and Power of Eliah, doth more in his Study (either for offence, or defence: either for the turning away of wrath, or the procuring of mercy) than a Camp royall, even forty thousand strong: yea (as the Spirit speaketh) Though they all have their swords girded to their thighs, and bee of the most valiant men in Israel. And this is cleerely proved in one verse of the booke of Psalmes, where the Prophet, having reckoned up the sinnes of the people, addeth, Therefore the Lord minded to destroy them, had not Moses (his chosen) stood in the breach, to turne away his wrath, lest hee should destroy them. See therefore what one man may doe with God. Some one man doth so binde the hands of God, that when he would strike, hee hath no power to doe it: as it is said of Lot, I can doe nothing till thou bee come out. See how the Lord saith hee can doe nothing, because hee will doe nothing: He doth wittingly and willingly suffer his hands to bee manacled and bound behinde him, for some fewes sake, which he doth make more account of than all the world besides;

Cant. 3. 7.

Ps. 106. 23.

Gen. 19. 30.

beſides; ſo precious and deare are they in his ſight. Likewiſe it is written, that the Lord was exceedingly incenſed againſt the Iſraelites for their Idolatrous Calfe which they made in Horeb: yet he could doe nothing, becauſe Moſes would not let him. And therefore he falleth to entreating of Moſes, that Moſes would let him alone, and intreat no more for them. Oh (ſaith the Lord to Moſes) Exod. 32. 10 let mee alone, that my wrath may wax hot againſt this people, and that I may conſume them. Thus we ſee, that except Lot goe out of the City, and Moſes let him alone, he can do nothing. O the profoundneſſe and altitude of Gods mercy toward mankinde! O the height and depth, length and breadth of his love toward ſome! O that the moſt glorious and inviſible God ſhould ſo greatly reſpect the ſons of men. For what is man that hee ſhould be mindfull of him, or the ſon of man that hee ſhould regard him; Let us therefore that are the Lords Remembrancers, give him no reſt, nor let him alone untill we have ſome ſecurity and good aſſurance from him, that he will turne away from us the wrath which we moſt juſtly have deſerved; that he will ſpare us, and bee mercifull unto us. Yea, as the Iſa. 62. 7. Prophet ſaith, Let us never leave him,

nor

nor give him over, till he repaire and set up Jerusalem, the praise of the world: lest for default hereof, that be charged upon us, which was charged upon the head of some of the Prophets in Israel, that they were like the foxes in the waste places, that they had not risen up in the gaps; neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel. For now adayes (alas) wee have many hedge-breakers, few hedge-makers; many openers of gaps, few stoppers; many makers of breaches, to let in the floods of Gods wrath upon us, but very few, that by true repentance goe about to make up the breach, and to let downe the sluces, that the gushing streames of Gods vengeance may be stopt and staied. Ezc.13.4,5

Phil. I do now plainely see, that there be some in high favour with God, and, as we say, greatly in his books: sith his love is so great unto them, that for their sake he spareth thousands.

Theol. It is written in the Proverbs of Solomon, that the righteous in a land are the establishment of the kings throne; and the wicked, the overthrowing of the same. The words are these: Take away the drosse from the silver, and there will proceed a vessell for the finer. Take away the wicked from the King, and his Throne shall bee established in righteousnesse. Prov.25.4.

Like-

Likewise in another place the wiseman affirmeth that the righteous are the strength and bulwarks of Cities, Townes, and Corporations: but the wicked are the weakening and undoing of all. Prov. 27.8. Scornfull men (saith hee) set a City on fire, but the wise turne away wrath. To this purpose most excellent is that saying of Eliphas in Job, Iob 22.30. The innocent shall deliver the Iland, and it shall bee preserved by the pureneſſe of their hands. Wee read in the booke of the Chronicles, 2 Chron. 11. 14,16,17. that when the Levites and the Priests were cast out by Jeroboam, they came to Jeruſalem, and all such as set their hearts to seeke the Lord God of Israel came with them. And then afterward it is said they strengthened the Kingdome of Juda, and made Rehoboam the sonne of Solomon mighty. By all these testimonies it is evident, that Princes, Kingdomes, Cities, Townes and Villages, are fortified by the righteous therein: and for their sakes also great plagues are kept backe, which thing one of the Heathen did well see into; as appeareth by his words, which are these; When God meaneth well to a City, and will doe it good, then he raiseth up good men: but when hee meaneth to punish a City or a Country, and doe ill unto it, then he taketh away the good men from it.

Phil.

Phil. It is very manifest, by all that you have alledged, that the wicked fare the better, every day in the yeere, for the righteous that dwell amongst them.

Theol. All experience doth teach it, and the Scriptures doe plentifully avouch it. For did not churlish Laban fare the better for Jacob his kinsman? Doth hee not acknowledge that the Lord had blessed him for his sake? Did not Potiphar fare the better for godly Joseph? Doth not the Scripture say, that the Lord blessed the Egyptians house for Joseph his sake? and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand? Did not Obed-Edom fare the better for the Arke? Did not the seventy and sixe soules, that were in the ship with Paul speed all the better for his sake? Did not the Angell of God tell him in the night, that God had given unto him all that sailed with him? for otherwise a thousand to one they had beene all drowned. Therefore the children of God may very fitly bee compared to a great piece of cooke, which though it bee cast into the sea having many nailes fastened in it, yet it beareth them all up from sinking, which otherwise would sinke of themselves. What shall wee say then, or what shall wee conclude, but that the ungodly

Gen. 30. 27.

Gen. 39. 5.

2 Sam. 6. 1

Acts 27. 24.

ungodly are more beholden to the righteous than they are aware of.

Phil. I doe thinke if it were not for Gods children, it would goe hard with the wicked. For if they were sorted and shoaled out from amongst them, and placed by themselves, what could they looke for but wrath upon wrath, and plague upon plague, till the Lord had made a finall consumption, and sweept them like dung from the face of the earth?

Theol. Sure it is all creatures would frowne upon them. The Sun would unwillingly shine upon them, or the Moone give them any light. The Starres would not bee seene of them, and the Planets would hide themselves. The beasts would devoure them, the fowles would picke out our eyes. The fishes would make warre against them, and all creatures in heaven and earth would rise up in armes against them. Yea, the Lord himselfe from heaven would raine downe fire and brimstone upon them.

Phil. Yet for all this, it is a wonder to consider how deadly the wicked hate the righteous, and almost in every thing oppose themselves against them, and that in most virulent and spiteful manner. They raile and slander, scoffe and scorne, mocke and mow at them, as though

though they were not worthy to live upon the earth. They esteeme every pelting rascall, and preferre every vile varlet before them. And though they have their lives and liberty, their breath and safety, and all that they have else by them, yet for all that they could be content to eat their heart with garlick: so great, so fiery, so burning and hissing hot is their fury and malice against them.

Theol. They may very fitly be compared to a Moth that fretteth in pieces the same cloth wherein she is bred: or to a certaine Worme or canker, that corrodeth and eateth thorow the heart of the tree that nourisheth her: or unto a man that standeth upon a bough in the top of a tree where there is no more, and yet with an axe chopeth it off, & therewithall falleth down with it, and breaketh his necke. Even so the fooles of this world doe what they can to chop asunder the bough that upholds them, but they may know easily what will follow.

Phil. I see plainly they be much their owne foes, and stand in their own light, and indeed know not what they doe. For the benefit which they receive by such is exceeding great, and therefore by their maligning of them, they doe but hold the stirrup to their owne destruction.

Theol. **Now to apply these things to our selves, and to returne to the first question of this argument: may we not marvell that our Nation is so long spared, considering that the sins thereof are so horrible and outrageous as they be?**

Phil. We may justly marvell at the wonderfull patience of God: and wee may well thinke that there be some in the land which stand in the breach, being in no small favour with his Highnesse, sith they doe much prevaile.

Theol. **The mercifull preservation of our most gratious King, who is the breath of our nostrils, the long [illegible]ance of our peace, and of the the keeping backe of the [illegible] the land, which our sinnes pull upo[illegible]s, the frustrating of many plots and subtill devices which have beene often inbented against our State, yea, and the life of his Majesties most royall person, make mee to thinke that there be some strong pleaders with God for the publike good of us all.**

Phil. You may well thinke so indeed: for by our sins wee have forfeited (and daily doe forfeit into Gods hands) both our King, our Country, our Peace, our Gospell, our lives, our goods, our lands, our livings, our wives, our children, and all that we have: but onely the righ-

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teous (which are so neere about the King, and in so high favour) doe step in and earnestly intreat for us, that the forfeitures may be released, and that we may have lease (in parley) of them all againe, or at least a grant of further time. But I pray you Sir, are not we to attribute something concerning our good estate to the policie of the land, the lawes established, and the wisedome and counsell of our prudent Governours?

Theol. **Yes assuredly, very much as the ordinary and outward meanes which God useth for our safety. For though the Apostle** Paul **had a grant from God for the safety of his owne life, and all that were with him in the ship, yet he said,** Except the mariners abide in the ship, wee cannot be safe. **Shewing thereby, that unto faith and prayers the best and wisest meanes must be joyned. We are therefore upon our knees every day to give thankes unto God for such good meanes of our safety as hee hath given us,** Acts 28. 31.

Phil. Well then, as the prayers of the righteous have beene hitherto great meanes both for the hindering and turning away of wrath, and the continuance of favour; so shew, I pray you what is the best course to bee taken, and what in sound wisedome is to bee done,

both to prevent future dangers, and to continue Gods favours and mercies still upon us.

Theol. **The best and surest course that I can consider or conceive of, is, to repent heartily for sins past, and to reforme our lives in time to come, to seek the Lord while he may be found, and to call upon him while he is neer, to forsake our owne wayes, and our owne imaginations, and to turne unto him with all our hearts, with weeping, with fasting, and with mourning, as the Prophet** Joel, ch. 2. **exhorteth.** For our God is gracious and mercifull, slow to anger, and of great kindnesse, and repenteth him of the evill. **All the Prophets doe counsell us to follow this course, and doe plainely teach, that if wee all (from the highest to the lowest) doe meet the Lord with unfained repentance, and offer him the sacrifice of a contrite spirit, undoubtedly hee will bee pacified towards us, and bee mercifull to our transgressions. This is most plainely set downe in the seventh of** Jeremy, **where the Lord saith thus to his people,** If you amend and redresse your wayes, and your workes: If you execute judgement betwixt a man and his neighbour, and oppresse not the stranger, the fatherlesse, and the widow, and shed no innocent bloud in this place, Ier. 7.

neither

neither walke after other gods, to your destruction; then will I let you dwell in this place, even in the Land which I gave unto your Fathers, for ever and ever. **So likewise he saith by the same Prophet.** Execute yee judgement and righteousnesse, and deliver the oppressed from the hand of the oppressor, and vexe not the fatherlesse, the widow, or the strangers: doe no violence, nor shed innocent bloud in this place. For if you doe this thing, then shall the King, sitting upon the Throne of *David*, enter in by the gates of this house, and ride upon chariots, and upon horses, both hee and his servants, and his people. **And againe,** O ye disobedient children, returne, and I will heale your rebellion. **The Lord also saith by his Prophet** Esay, If ye consent and obey, ye shall eat the good things of the Land: but if ye refuse, and bee rebellious, ye shall bee devoured with the sword. For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. **The Prophet** Hosea saith, Come, let us returne to the Lord: for he hath spoiled, and hee will heale us: hee hath wounded us, and he will bind us up. **And againe,** O Israel, returne unto the Lord (for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity) and I will heale thy rebellion, and will love thee freely: for mine anger is turned away from thee. I will be as the dew unto

Ier. 22. 5.

Ier. 3. 22.

Esay 1. 19.

Hosea 6. 1.

Hosea 13. 1.

Israel: hee shall grow as the Lilly, and fasten his root as the trees of Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall bee as the Olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon.

The Prophet Micah **telleth us what is good for us, and what is our best course, and what the Lord requireth at our hands; namely, these foure things,** To doe justly, to love mercy, to humble our selves, and to walke with our God. **The Prophet** Amos **giveth the same counsell, saying,** Seeke the Lord, and ye shall live. Seeke good, and not evill. Hate the evill, and love the good, and establish judgement in the gate. It may bee that the Lord of Hosts will bee mercifull unto the remnant of Joseph. **And the Lord himselfe saith,** If this Nation, against whom I have pronounced, turne from their wickednesse, I will repent of the plague I thought to bring upon them. **Thus wee doe plainly see what advice and counsell the Prophets and holy men of God doe give unto us. The summe of all is this, that if wee doe truely repent, and turne unto him with all our hearts (studying to obey him, and walke in his wayes) then he will grant us any favour that wee will require at his hands. For even as a wooll-packe, or other soft matter, beateth backe, and dampeth the force of**

Micah 6.8.

Amos 5.38.

Ier.18.8.

of all shot; so penitent, melting, and soft hearts doe beat backe the shot of Gods wrath, and turne away his venegance from us. Moreover, wee may observe, in all experience, that when Potentates are offended, or any great man hath conceived a displeasure against some poore man, then hee must runne and ride, send presents, use his friends, breake his sleep, and never be quiet untill he have pacified him: Even so must we deale with our God, seeing he hath taken a displeasure against us. O therefore that wee would speedily use all possible meanes to pacifie his wrath! Oh that wee would with one heart and voice, every one of us (from the highest to the lowest) humble our selves before our God, forsake our former evill wayes, be grieved for that wee have done, and purpose never to doe the like againe! Oh that it might goe to the hearts of us, that we have so often and so grievously offended so loving a God, and so mercifull a Father! Oh that wee would awake once at last, and rowse up our drowsie hearts, and ransacke our sleepie consciences, crying out against our sins, that our sins might never cry out against us! Oh that we would judge our selves, accuse our selves, endite our selves, and condemne our selves! so should wee

neuer be adjudged, accused, endited, or condemned of the Lord. Oh that all hearts might sob, all soules might sigh, all loins might be smitten with sorrow, all faces gather blacknes, & every man smite himself on the thigh, saying, what have I done? O that both Magistracy, Ministry, & Commonalty, would purpose and vow, & eben take a bond of themselves, that from henceforth, & from this day forward, they would set their hearts to seeke the Lord, and wholly give up themselves to his obedience! Oh that all men, women, and children, would feare God, and keepe his commandements; would eschew euill, and doe good; would study to please God in all things, and so be fruitfull in all good workes, making conscience to performe the duties of their generall callings, and duties of their speciall callings; duties of the first Table, and duties of the second Table: that so God might be sincerely worshipped, his Name truely reuerenced, his Sabbaths religiously obserued; and that every man would deale kindly, mercifully, iustly, and uprightly with his neighbour, that there might be no complaining, no crying in our streets! Oh, I say againe and againe, that if all of us, of what estate, degree, or condition soeuer, would walke in the paths of our

our God, then doubtleſſe we ſhould live and ſee good dayes, all future dangers ſhould be prevented, our peace prolonged, our ſtate eſtabliſhed, our King preſerved, and the Goſpel continued. Then ſhould we ſtill enjoy our lives, our goods our lands, our livings, our wives, our children, our houſes and tenements, our orchards and gardens: yea, as the Prophet ſaith, we ſhall eat the good things of the Land, ſpend our dayes in much comfort, peace, and tranquillity, and leave great bleſſings unto our children and poſteritie, from age to age, from generation to generation.

Phil. You have fully anſwered my queſtion, and well ſatisfied me therein out of the Scriptures: yet, I pray you, give me leave to adde one thing to that which you have at large ſet downe. The Lord ſaith by the Prophet *Amos*, Amos 4.6,7 that for their ſins and rebellions he had given them cleanneſſe of teeth, that is, dearth and ſcarcitie: and yet they did not turne unto him. Alſo he with-held the raine from them, and puniſhed them with drought, and yet they did not turne unto him. Moreover, he ſmote their Corne, their great Gardens, their Orchards, Vineyards, Fig-trees, and Olive-trees, with blaſting and mildew, and the Palmer worm did devoure them: and yet they did

not returne unto him. Last of all hee smote them with pestilence, and with the sword, and overthrew them, as hee overthrew Sodome, and Gomorrah, and they were as a fire-brand pluckt out of the burning: yet for all this they did not turne unto him. Ye have not turned unto mee, saith the Lord. But now to come to the point. Out of this I gather, that if wee multiply our transgressions, God will multiply his plagues upon us: but on the contrary, if wee would unfainedly turne unto the Lord our God with all our hearts, all plagues should bee stayed, all dangers prevented, and no evill should fall upon us. For because they would not turne, therefore hee smote them. If therefore they had turned, hee would not have smote them. But now, I pray you, briefly conclude this point, and declare in few words what it is that doth most materially concerne our peace and publike good.

Theol. **These few then briefly I take to bee the things which belong to our peace.**

Ten things concerning our peace.

Let Solomon **execute** Joab **and** Shimei.

Let Achab **and** Eliah **slay the Priests and Prophets of** Baal.

Let Aaron **and** Eleazar **minister before the Lord faithfully.**

Let Jonas **be cast out of the ship.**

Let

Let Moſes **ſtand faſt in the gap, and not let downe his hand.**
Let Joſuah **ſucceed him.**
Let Cornelius **feare God with all his houſhold.**
Let Tabitha **be full of good workes and almesdeeds.**
Let Deborah **judge long in Iſrael, proſper, and be victorious.**
Let us pray that the light of Iſrael may not be quenched.
And this I take to be the ſumme of all that belongs to our peace.

Phil. The ſumme of all our conference hitherto, as I remember, may be reduced unto theſe few heads: Firſt, mans naturall corruption hath beene laid open. Secondly, the horrible fruits thereof. Thirdly, their evill effects and workings both againſt our ſoules and bodies, goods, name, and the whole Land. Laſtly, the remedies of all. Now therefore I would grow to ſome concluſion of that which you touched by the way, and made ſome mention of; namely, the ſignes of ſalvation and damnation: and declare unto us plainely whether the ſtate of a mans ſoule before God may not by certaine ſignes and tokens bee certainely diſcerned in this life.

Theol. **Beſides thoſe which before have beene mentioned, wee may adde theſe nine following.**

Reverence

Nine signes of a sound soule.

Reverence of Gods Name.
Keeping of his Sabbaths.
Truth.
Sobriety.
Industry.
Compassion.
Humility.
Chastity.
Contentation.

Phil. These indeed, I grant, are very good signes, but yet all of them are not certaine: for some of them may be in the reprobates.

Theol. **What say you then to St.** Peters **signes, set downe in the first chapter of his second Epistle: which are these eight:**

St. Peters eight signes of salvation 2 Pet. 1. 8.

Faith.
Vertue.
Knowledge.
Temperance.
Patience.
Godlinesse.
Brotherly kindnesse.
Love.

Saint Peter **saith,** If these be in us and abound, they will make us neither idle nor unfruitfull in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus. **Which is as much as if he had said, They will make us sound and sincere Professors of the Gospel.**

Phil.

Phil. All these, I grant, are exceeding good signes and evidences of a mans salvation: but yet some of them may deceive, and a hole may be picked in some of these Evidences. I would therefore heare of some such demonstrative and infallible Evidences as no Lawyer can finde fault with. For I hold that good Divines can as perfectly judge of the assurances and evidences of mans salvation, as the best Lawyer can judge of the assurances and evidences, whereby men hold their lands and livings.

Theol. **You have spoken truly in that. And would to God all the Lords people would bring forth the Evidences of their salvation, that wee might discerne of them.**

Phil. Set downe then which bee the most certaine and infallible Evidences of a mans salvation: against which no exception can be taken.

Theol. **I judge these to bee most sound and infallible.**

Assured faith in the promises.
Sincerity of heart.
The Spirit of adoption.
Sound Regeneration and Sanctification.
Inward peace.
Grounded ness in the truth.
Continuance to the end.

Seven infallible signes of salvation
Act. 16. 31.
Pro. 1. 20.
Ioh. 1. 41.
Rom. 8. 14.
Ioh. 4. 3.
1 Thes. 4. 5.
Rom. 5. 1.
Col. 1. 23.
Mat. 24. 13.

Phil. Now you come neere the quick indeed. For in my judgement, none of these

these can bee found truly in any reprobate. Therefore I think no Divine can take exception against any of these.

Theol. No, I assure you: no more then a Lawyer can finde fault with the Tenure of mens lands and fresimples, when-as both the title is good, and strong by law, and the evidences thereof are sealed, subscribed, delivered, conveyed, and sufficient witnesse upon the same, and all other signes and ceremonies (in the delivering, and taking possession thereof) according to strict law observed. For if a man have these forenamed evidences of his salvation, sure it is, his title and interest to heaven is good, by the Law of Moses and the Prophets, I meane the word of God. God himselfe subscribeth to them: Jesus Christ delivereth them as his own deed: the holy Ghost sealeth unto them: yea, the three great witnesses, which beare record in the earth (that is, water, blood, and the spirit) do all witnesse the same.

Phil. Now you have very fully satisfied mee touching this point. And one thing more I doe gather out of all your speech, to wit, that you doe thinke a man may bee assured of his salvation even in this life.

Theol. I do thinke so indeed. For hee that knoweth not in this life that he

he shall be saved, shall never be saved after this life. For S. John saith, Now we are made the sons of God. 1 Ioh. 3. 2.

Phil. But because many doubt of this, and the Papists doe altogether deny it; therefore, I pray you, confirm it unto us out of the Scriptures.

Theol. The Apostle saith, Wee know, that if our earthly house of this Tabernacle be destroyed, we have a building given us of God; that is, an house not made with hands, but eternall in the heavens. 2 Cor. 5. 2. Marke, that hee saith, both hee, and the rest of Gods people, did certainly know that Heaven was provided for them. For the spirit of adoption beareth witnesse with our spirits, that we are the children of God. Rom. 8. 15, 16. And againe, the same Apostle saith, from henceforth is laid up for me the crown of righteousnesse: which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but to all them that love his appearing. 2 Tim. 4. 8. Here we see, that he knew there was a crown prepared for him, and for the Elect. And the same Spirit which did assure it unto Paul, doth assure it also to all the children of God. For they have all the same Spirit, though not in the same measure. Saint John saith also, Herein wee are sure we know him, if we keep his commandements. 1 Ioh. 2. 3. In which words S. John

S. John teacheth us thus much, that if we do unfainedly endeavour to obey God, there is in us the true knowledge and feare of God: and consequently we are sure we shall be saved. S. Peter saith, Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure. Wherefore should the Apostle exhort us to make our election sure, if none could be sure of it? In the second of the Ephesians, the Apostle saith flatly, that in Christ Jesus wee doe already sit together in heavenly places. His meaning is not, that we are there already in possession; but we are as sure of it, as if wee were there already. The reasons hereof are these: Christ our head is in possession: Therefore he will draw all his members unto him, as he himselfe saith.

2 Pet. 1.10.

Secondly, we are as sure of the thing which wee hope for, as of that which wee have: but we are sure of that which wee have, which is the worke of grace: therefore we are sure of that wee looke for, which is the crowne of glory. Many other places of the holy Scriptures might be alledged to this purpose: but, I suppose, these may suffice.

Ioh. 12.22. Ioh. 14.13.

Phil. As you have shewed this by the Scriptures: so also shew it more plainly by evident reason out of the same.

Theol. How can a man in truth call God

God his Father (when he saith, Our Father which art in heaven) and yet doubt whether he is his Father, or no? For if God indeed be our Father, and we his children, how can wee perish? how can wee bee damned? will a Father condemne his owne children? shall the children of God be condemned? No, no: There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Againe, who can lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect? it is God that justifieth, who can condemne? It is therefore most certaine and sure, that all such as doe in truth call God their Father, and have God for their Father, shall be saved. Againe, how can a man say, in truth & stedfastnesse of sinne, and yet doubt whether he shall be saved? For if he be fully perswaded that his sinne be forgiven, what letteth why he should not be saved? Moreover, as certainly as wee know we are called, justified & sanctified: so certainly wee know wee shall be glorified. But we know the one certainly, and therefore the other.

Rom. 8.1.

Rom. 8.33,34

Asm. I will never beleeve, that any man can certainly know, in this world, whether he shall be saved or damned; but all men must hope well, and bee of a good beliefe.

Theol. Nay, we must goe further than

than hope-well: we may not venture our salvation upon uncertaine hopes. As if a man should hope it would bee a faire day to morrow, but hee cannot certainely tell. No, no: wee must in this case, being of such infinite importance as it is, grow to some certainety and full resolution. Wee see worldly men will be loth to hold their lands and leases uncertainely, having nothing to shew for them. They will not stand to the courtesie of their land-lords, nor rest upon their good willes. They will not stay upon uncertaine hopes. No, they are wiser than so. For the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light. Luke 16. They will bee sure to have something to shew. They will have it under seale. They will not stay upon the words and promises of the most honest men, and best land-lords. They cannot bee quiet till they have it in white and blacke, with sound counsell upon their Title, and every way made as sure unto them, as any Law of the Land can make it.

Are then the children of this world so wise in these inferiour things, and shall not wee be as wise in matters of ten thousand times more importance? Are they so wise for earth, and shall not wee be as wise for Heaven? Are they

they so wise for their bodies, and shall not we bee as wise for our soules? Shall wee hold the state of our immortall inheritance by hope-well, and have no writings, or evidences, no seale, no witnesses, nor any thing to shew for it? Alas! this is a weake Tenure, a broken Title, a simple hold indeed.

Asun. Yet for all that a man cannot be certaine.

Theol. Yes: S. John telleth us wee may bee certaine. For hee saith, Hereby we know we dwell in him; and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. He saith not, wee hope, but we know certainly. For he that hath the spirit of God, knoweth certainly hee hath it; & he that hath faith, knoweth that he hath faith; and hee that shall be saved, knoweth hee shall bee saved. For God doth not worke so darkely in mens hearts by his Spirit, but that they may easily know whether it be of him or no, if they would make a due triall. Againe, the same Apostle saith, He that beleeveth in the Son of God, hath the witnesse in himselfe. That is, he hath certaine testimonies in his owne conscience, that hee shall be saved. For we must fetch the warrant of our salvation from within our selves; even from the worke of God within us. For looke how much

1 Ioh. 4. 13.

1 Ioh. 5. 16.

much a man feeleth in himselfe the increase of knowledge, obedience, and godlinesse, so much the more sure he is that he shall bee saved. A mans owne conscience is of great force this way, and will not lye, or deceive. For so saith the wise man, As water sheweth face to face, so doth the heart, man unto man. That is, the minde and conscience of every man telleth him justly (though not perfectly) what he is. For the conscience will not lie, but accuse or excuse a man, being in stead of a thousand witnesses.

Prov. 27. 19

The Apostle saith, No man knowes the things of man, but the spirit of man that is in him. And againe the Scripture saith, Mans soule is as it were the candle of the Lord, whereby he searcheth all the bowels of the belly. So then, it is a cleere case, that a man must have recourse to the worke of Gods grace within him, even in his owne soule: and thereby hee shall bee certainely resolved one way or other. For even as Rebecca knew certainly, by the striving and stirring of the twins in her wombe, that shee was conceived and quick of childe: so Gods children know certainely, by the motions and stirring of the holy Ghost within them, that they have conceived Christ, and shall undoubtedly bee saved.

1 Cor. 2. 11.

Pro. 20. 29.

Phil.

Phil. I pray you let us come to the ground-work of this certainty of salvation, and speak somewhat of that.

Theol. **The ground-worke of our salvation is laid in Gods eternall election; and, in respect thereof, it standeth fast and unmoveable, as it is written,** The foundation of God standeth fast. 2 Tim.2.18 1 Thes.5.24 **And againe,** He is faithfull that hath promised: Though wee cannot beleeve; yet hee abides faithfull. 2 Tim.2.13. **So then, as we know it certainely in our selves, by the consequence of election; so it standeth most firme in respect of God, and his eternall and immutable decree. And a thousand infirmities (nay, all the sinnes of the world, nay all the divels in hell) cannot overthrow Gods election. For our Lord Jesus saith,** All that the father hath given mee, shall come unto me. John 6.34. **And againe,** This is the Fathers will that hath sent mee, that of all which hee hath given mee, I should lose nothing; but should raise it up againe at the last day. John 6.39. **And in another place our Saviour Christ saith,** My sheepe heare my voyce, and I know them, and they follow mee, and I give unto them eternall life: and they shall never perish, neither shall any plucke them out of my hand. My father, which gave them me, is greater than all: and none is able to take them out of my Fathers hand. Joh.10.27.

hand, we ought therefore to bee as sure of our salvation, as of any other thing which God hath promised, or which we are bound to beleeve. For to doubt thereof, in respect of Gods truth, is blasphemous against the immutability of his truth.

Phil. But are there not some doubts, at some times, even in the very elect, and in those which are growne to the greatest perswasion?

Theol. Yes verily. For he that never doubted, never beleeved. For whosoever beleeveth in truth, feeleth sometimes doubtings and waverings. Even as the sound body feeleth many grudgings of diseases, which if hee had not health he could not feele: so the sound soule feeleth some doubtings, which if it were not sound it could not so easily feele. For we feele not corruption by corruption, but wee feele corruption by grace. And the more grace we have, the more quicke wee are in the feeling of corruption. Some men of tender skins and quicke feeling will easily feele the lightest feather, in softest manner, laid upon the ball of their heads; which others, of more slow feeling & hard flesh, cannot so easily discerne. So then it is certaine, that although the children of God feele some doubtings at some times, yet the same doe no whit impeach

peach the certainty of their salvation; but rather argue a perfect soundnesse and health of their soules. For when such little grudgings are felt in the soule, the children of God oppose against them the certainty of Gods truth and promises, and so do easily overcome them. For the Lords people need no more to feare them than he that rides through the streets upon a lusty Gelding, with his sword by his side, needs to feare the barking and bawling of a few litle curs and whappets.

Phil. Shew yet more plainely how or in what respect the child of God may both have doubtings, and yet bee fully assured.

Theol. Even as a man set on the top of the highest steeple in the world, and so fast bound unto it that hee cannot fall though he would, yet when he looketh downeward he feareth, because mans nature is not acquainted nor accustomed to mount so high in the aire, and to behold the earth so farre beneath; but when hee looketh upward, and perceiveth himselfe fast bound, and out of all danger, then he casteth away all care: Even so, when we looke downeward to our selves, we have doubts and feares; but when wee look upward to Christ, and the truth of his promises, wee feele our selves

selves rock-sure, and cease to doubt any more.

Phil. Declare unto us what is the originall of these doubts and feares, and from whence they spring in the children of God.

Theol. They spring from the imperfection of our regeneration, and from that strife which is in the very mind of the elect, betweene faith and infidelity. For these two doe mightily fight together in the most regenerate, and strive to over-master and ouershadow one another. By reason whereof sometimes it commeth to passe, through the prevailing of unbeliefe, that the most excellent servants of God may fall into fits and pangs of despaire, as Iob and David in their temptations did. And even in these dayes also some of Gods children at some times are shrewdly handled this way, and brought very low, even unto deaths doore: but yet the Lord in great mercy doth recover them both from totall and finall despaire. Onely they are humbled and tried by these sharpe fits for a time, and that for their great good. For as we use to say, that an ague in a young man is a signe of health: so these burning fits of temptations in the elect, for the most part, are signes of Gods grace and favour. For if they were not of

God,

God, the Devil would never bee so busie with them.

Phil. Is it not meere presumption, and an overmuch trusting to our selves, to be perswaded of our salvation?

Theol. Nothing lesse. For the ground of this perswasion is not laid in our selves, or any thing within us, or without us; but onely in the righteousnesse of Christ, and the mercifull promises of God. For is it any presumption for us to beleeve that which God hath promised, Christ hath purchased, and the holy Ghost hath sealed? No verily, it is not any presumption, but a thing which wee all stand bound unto, as wee will answer it at the dreadfull day of judgement. As for our selves, wee doe freely confesse, that in Gods sight wee are but lumps of sinne, and masses of misery, and cannot of our selves move hand or foot to the furtherance of our salvation. But being justified by faith, we are at peace with God, and fully perswaded of his love and favour towards us in Christ.

Phil. Cannot the reprobates and ungodly be assured of their salvation?

Theol. No. For the Prophet saith, There is no peace to the wicked. Esay 57. 21. Then I reason thus: They which have not the inward peace cannot bee assu-

My red:

red: But the wicked have not the inward peace; Therefore they cannot be assured. Stedfast faith in the promises doth assure: But the wicked have not stedfast faith in the promises; Therefore they cannot bee assured. The Spirit of adoption doth assure: But the wicked have not the Spirit of adoption; Therefore they cannot be assured.

To conclude: When a man feeleth in himselfe an evill conscience, blindnesse, prophanenesse, and disobedience, he shall, in despight of his heart, sing this dolefull song; I know not whether I shall be saved or damned.

Phil. Is not the doctrine of the assurance of salvation a most comfortable doctrine?

Theol. Yes doubtlesse. For except a man bee perswaded of the favour of God, and the forgivenesse of sins, and consequently of his salvation, what comfort can hee have in any thing? Besides this, the perswasion of Gods love towards us is the root of all our love and cheerefull obedience towards him: For therefore wee love him and obey him, because wee know hee hath loved us first, and written our names in the Booke of life. But on the contrary, that generall doctrine of the Papists, which would have men alwayes doubt and leave in a servile fear,

sect, is most hellish and uncomfortable. For so long as a man holds that, what encouragement can he have to serve God? what love to his Majesty? what hope in the promises? what comfort in trouble? what patience in adversity?

Anil. Touching this point I am flat of your mind. For I thinke verily a man ought to be perswaded of his salvation: and for mine owne part I make no question of it. I hope to bee saved as well as the best of them all. I am out of feare for that. For I have such a stedfast faith in God, that if there should be but two in the world saved, I hope I should be one of them.

Theol. You are very confident indeed. You are perswaded before you know. I would your ground were as good as your vaine confidence. But who is so bold as blind Bayard? your hope is but fancy, and as a sicke mans dreame. You hope you cannot tell what. You have no ground for what you say. For what hope can you have to be saved, when you walke in no path of salvation? what hope can a man have to come to London speedily, that travelleth nothing that way, but quite contrary? what hope can a man have to reape a good crop of corne, that useth no meanes, neither ploweth, soweth, nor

partiuerly? what hope can a man haue to bee safe and well eating of his body, that seldome or neuer eateth any meat? what hope can a man haue to escape drowning, which leapeth into the Sea? Euen so what hope can you haue to be saued, when you walke nothing that way, when you vse no meanes, when you doe all things that are contrary to the same? For (alas) there is nothing in you of those things which the Scriptures doe affirme must be in all those that shall be saued. There bee none of the foremained signes and tokens in you. You are ignorant, prophane, and careless. God is not worshipped vnder your roofe. There is no true feare of God in your heart, nor in your houshold. You seldome heare the word preached. You content your selfe with an ignorant Minister. You haue no prayers in your family, no reading, no singing of Psalmes, no instructions, exhortations, admonitions, or any other Christian exercises. You make no conscience of the obseruation of the Sabbath. You vse not the name of God with any reuerence. You breake out sometimes into horrible oathes and cursings. You make an ordinary matter of swearing by your faith and your troth. Your talke is irreligious, your behauiour disorderly and vngra-

cious

ous, your servants prophane and care-lesse. You are an example in your owne house of all Atheisme and conscience-lesse behaviour. You are a great gamester, a riotour, a spend-thrift, a dicer, a common ale-house-hunter, a whore-hunter; and, to conclude, given to all vice and naughtinesse. Now then, I pray you, tell me or rather let your conscience tell me, what hope can you have to be saved, so long as you walk and continue in this course. Doth not S. John say, If we say wee have fellowship with him, and walke in darkenesse, we are liers? Doth not the same Apostle avouch, that such as say they know God, and keepe not his commandements, are lyers? 1 Iohn 1.6. 1 Iohn 3.4.

Againe, doth hee not say, Hee that committeth sin, is of the Divell? And, Whosoever doth not righteousnesse, is not of God? Doth not our Lord Jesus flatly tell the Jewes (which bragged that Abraham was their father) that they were of their father the Devell, because they did his workes? Doth not the Apostle Paul say, His servants we are to whom we obey, whether it be of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousnesse? Doth not the Scripture say, He that doth righteousnesse is righteous? Doth not our Lord Jesus affirme, that, Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter 1 Iohn 3.18. Rom. 6.16. Iohn 3.7.

Mat. 7. 21. into the kingdome of heaven, but hee that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven. **Therefore I conclude, that forasmuch as your whole course is carnall, careleſſe, and diſſolute, you can have no warrantable hope to bee ſaved.**

Phil. I do verily think that this mans caſe (which now you have laid open) is the caſe of thouſands.

Theol. **Yea doubtleſſe, of thouſand thouſands, the more is the pitie.**

Aſun. Soft and faire, Sir, you are very round indeed. Soft fire maketh ſweet mault. I hope you know wee muſt bee ſaved by mercy, and not by merit. If I could doe all my ſelfe, wherefore ſerveth Chriſt? I hope that which I cannot doe he will doe for me. And I hope to bee ſaved by Jeſus Chriſt as well as the beſt of you all.

Theol. **Oh, now I ſee which way the game goeth. You would faine make Chriſt a cloak for your ſinnes. You will ſin that grace may abound. You will ſin frankly, and ſet all upon Chriſts ſcore. Truely there bee many thouſands of your mind, which hearing of Gods abundant mercy in Chriſt, are thereby made more bold to ſin. But they ſhall know one day, to their coſt, what it is to abuſe the mercie of God.** The Apoſtle ſaith, The Rom. 2. 4. mercy and loving kindneſſe of God ſhould

should lead us to repentance. But we see it leads many to further hardnesse of heart. The Prophet saith, With him is mercy that hee may be feared. Psal. 130. 4. But many thereby are made more secure and carelesse. But to come nearer the marke: you say you hope to be saved by Jesus Christ. I answer, If those things bee found in you which the Scripture avoucheth to be in all that shall be saved by him, then you may have good confidence, and assured hope, otherwise not. Now the Scriptures doe thus determine it, and set it downe, that if a man be in Christ, and looke to bee saved by him, hee must bee endued with these qualities following.

Nine things required of all, that shall bee saved by Christ.

First, he must be a new Creature, 2 Cor. 5. 17.

Secondly, he must live, not after the lusts of men, but after the will of God, 1. Pet. 4. 2.

Thirdly, hee must bee zealous of good workes, Tit. 2. 14.

Fourthly, hee must die to sin, and live to righteousnesse, Rom. 6. 14.

Fifthly, he must be holy and unblameable, Col. 1. 22.

Sixthly, hee must so walke as Christ hath walked, 1 Joh. 2. 6.

Seventhly, he must crucifie the flesh, with the affections & lusts, Gal. 5. 24.

Eighthly, he must walk, not after the flesh, but after the spirit, Rom. 8. 1.

Psal. 119.

all of all, he must serve God in righteousnesse and true holinesse all the dayes of his life, Luke 1. 75.

Loe then what things are required of all that shall be saved by Christ. Now therefore if these things bee in you in some measure of truth, then your hope is currant, sound, and good; otherwise it is nothing worth. For in vaine doe men say, they hope to bee saved by Christ, when as they walke dissolutely. The reason hereof is, because the members must be sutable to the head: but Christ our head is holy, therefore wee his members must bee holy also: as it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy. Otherwise, if wee will joyne prophane and ungodly members to our holy head Christ, then wee make Christ a monster. As if a man should joyne unto the head of a Lyon, the neck of a Beare, the body of a horse, and the legs of a Fox, were it not a monstrous thing: would it not make a monstrous creature? Even such a thing they goe about, which would have Swearers, Drunkards, Whoremongers, and such like, to be the members of Christ, and to have life and salvation by him. But sith you doe so much presume on Christ, I pray you let me aske you a question.

1 Pet. 1. 15.

Amit. What is that?

Theol. How doe you know that Christ died for you particularly, and by name?

Anti. Christ dyed for all men, and therefore for me.

Theol. But all men shall not be saved by Christ. How therefore do you know that you are one of them that have speciall interest in Christ, and shall be saved by his death?

Anti. This I know, wee are all sinners, and cannot bee saved by any other than by Christ.

Theol. Answer directly to my question. How doe you know in your selfe, and for your selfe, that you are one of the elect, and one of those for whom Christ dyed?

Anti. I know it by my good faith in God, because I put my whole trust in him, and in none other.

Theol. But how know you that you have faith? or how shall a man know his faith?

Anti. I know it by this, that I have alwayes had as good a meaning, and as good a faith to God-ward, as any man of my calling, and that is not book-learned. I have alwayes feared God with all my heart, and served him with my prayers.

Theol. Tush, now you goe about the bush, and hover in the ayre: answer mee to the point. How doe you

know certainly and assuredly, that Christ dyed for you particularly, and by name?

Anti. You would make a man mad. You put mee out of my faith: you drive mee from Christ. But if you goe about to drive mee from Christ, I will never beleeve you. For I know wee must bee saved onely by him.

Theol. I goe not about to drive you from Christ, but to drive you to Christ. For how can I drive you from Christ, seeing you never came neere him? How can I drive you out of Christ, seeing you were never in him? But this is it that deceiveth you and many others, that you thinke you beleeve in Christ, because you say you beleeve in Christ: as though faith consisted in words: or as though a man had faith, because hee saith so. If every one that saith he hath faith, therefore hath faith, and every one that saith he beleeveth in Christ, doth therefore beleeve; then who will not have faith? who will not beleeve? But in very deed, your faith, and the faith of many others, is nothing else but meere imagination. But all this while you have not answered my question touching your particular knowledge of Christ.

Anti. I can answer you no otherwise than I have answered you. And I think I have

I have answered you sufficiently.

Theol. No, no: you faulter in your speech: your answer is not worth a button: you speak you wot not what: you are altogether befogged and benighted in this question. But if there were in your heart the true knowledge and lively feeling of God, then I am sure you would have yeelded another and a better answer: then you would have spoken something from the sense and feeling of your own heart, and from the worke of Gods grace within you. But because you can yeeld no sound reason that Christ died for you particularly and by name, therefore I suspect you are none of them which have proper interest in him, and in whom his death takes effect indeed.

Phil. I thinke this question would gravell a great number: and few there be that can answer it aright.

Theol. It is most certaine, I know it by lamentable experience, that not one of an hundred can soundly and sufficiently answer this question, none indeed, but onely those in whom the new worke is wrought, and doe by the inward worke of the Spirit feele Christ to bee theirs. I have talked with some, which are both witty, sensible, and learned, who notwithstanding, when they have beene brought

brought to this very point and time, have stuck fore at it, and staggered very much. And howsoever they might by wit and learning shuffle it over, and in a blundring sort speak reason, yet had they no feeling of that which they said, and therefore no assurance: and consequently as good never a whit, as never the better. It is the sanctifying Spirit, that giveth feeling in this point: and therefore without the feeling of the operation of the same spirit, it can never be soundly answered. Thus then, I doe close up this whole matter: As the Vine-branch cannot live and bring forth fruit, except it abide in the Vine: no more can wee, except wee abide in Christ, and be truly grafted in him by a lively faith: None can have any benefit by him; but they onely which dwell in him: None can live by Christ, but they which are changed into Christ: None are partakers of his body, but they which are in his body: None can be saved by Christ crucified, but they which are crucified with Christ: None can live with him being dead, but those which die with him being alive. Therefore let us root downward in mortification, that we may shoot upward in sanctification: let us dye to sinne, that we may live to righteousnesse: let us die while we

are

are alive, that we may live when we are dead.

Asw. If none can be saved by Christ, but onely these which are so qualified as you speak of, then Lord have mercy upon us: then the way to heaven is very strait indeed, and few at all shall bee saved. For there bee few such in the world.

Theol. You are no whit therein deceived. For when all comes to all, it is most certaine, that few shall bee saved: which thing I will shew unto you both by Scripture, reason, and examples.

Asw. First then let us heare it proved by the Scriptures.

Theol. Our Lord Jesus saith, Enter in at the straight gate. For it is the wide gate, and broad way that leads to destruction; and many there bee which goe in thereat: because the gate is strait, and the way narrow, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Mat. 7. 13.

Againe hee saith, Many are called, but few chosen. Mat. 20. 16.

In another place we read of a certaine man which came to our Saviour Christ, & asked him of purpose, whether few should be saved: To whom our Saviour answered thus: Strive to enter in at the strait gate. For many (I say unto you) will seeke to enter in, and shall not bee able. Luk. 13. 24.

In which answer, albeit our Saviour both

doth not answer directly to his question, either negatively or affirmatively, yet doth hee plainly insinuate by his speeches, that few shall be saved. For first hee bids us strive earnestly; noting thereby, that it is a matter of great griefe against the world, the Flesh, and the Divell. Secondly, he affirmeth that the gate is very strait, noting, that none can enter in without vehement crowding, and almost breaking their shoulder-bones. Lastly, he saith, that many which seeke to enter in shall not bee able; noting thereby, that even of them that seeke, many shall step short, because they seeke him not aright. Esaias also saith, Except the Lord of Hosts had left us a seed, wee had beene as Sodome; and had beene like to Gomorrah. The Apostle also alledgeth out of the Prophet, that the Lord will make a short account in the earth, and gather it into a short summe with righteousnesse. These Scriptures, I thinke, are sufficient to prove that few shall bee saved.

Esay 1.9.

Rom.9.28. Esay 10.22.

Asser. Now let us heare your reasons.

Theol. If wee come to reason, wee may rather wonder that any should be saved, than that few shall bee saved. For wee have all the lets and hinderances that may bee, both within us, and without us. Wee have (as they say)

say) the Sun, Moone, & seven Starrs against us. Wee have all the Divels in hell against us, with all their hornes, heads, marvellous strength, infinite wiles, cunning devices, deepe sleights, and methodicall temptations. Here runs a foule streame against us. Then have wee this present evill world against us, with her innumerable baits, snares, nets, gins, and grins, to catch us, fetter us, and entangle us. Here we have profits and pleasures, riches and honour, wealth and preferment, ambition and covetousnesse. Here comes in a Campe royall of spirituall and invisible enemies. Lastly, we have our flesh, that is, our corrupted nature against us: wee have our selves against our selves. For wee our selves are as great enemies to our salvation, as either the World, or the Divell. For our understanding, reason, will and affections are altogether against us. Our naturall wisedome is an enemy unto us. Our concupiscences and lust doe minister strength to Satans temptations. They are all in league with Satan against us. They take part with him in every thing against us and our salvation. They fight all under his standard, and receive their pay of him. This then goeth hard on our side, that the Divell

well hath an inward part against us: and we carry alwayes within us our greatest enemy, which is ever ready, day and night, to betray us into the hands of Satan; yea, to unbar the doore, and let him in to cut our throats. Here then wee see an huge army of dreadfull enemies, and a very legion of Divels, lying in ambush against our soules. Are not wee therefore poore wretches in a most pitifull case, which are thus betrayed and beleged on every side? All things then considered, may wee not justly marvell that any shall be saved? For who seeth not, who knoweth not, that thousand thousands are carried headlong to destruction, either with the temptations of the world, the flesh, or the Divell? But yet further, I will shew by another very manifest and apparant reason, that the number of Gods Elect upon the face of the earth, are very few in comparison, which may thus be considered: First, let there be taken from amongst us all treacherous papists, atheists, & heretickes. Secondly, let there be shoaled out all vicious and notorious evill-livers; as, Swearers, Drunkards, whoremongers, worldlings, Deceivers, Coleners, Proud men, Thieves, Gamesters, & all the profane multitude. Thirdly, let there be refused

safely and cloaked out all hypocrites, carnall Protestants, vain Professors, Backsliders, Deceivers, Rotten Christians. Set all these, I say, be separated, and then tell me how many sound, sincere, faithfull, and zealous worshippers of God will be found amongst us. I suppose you should not need the Art of Arithmatick to number them. For I thinke there would bee very few in every Village, Town, and City: I doubt they would walk very thinly in the streets, so as a man might easily tell them as they go. Our Lord Jesus makes a question in the Gospel of S. Luke, saying, Do you think when the Son of man commeth that hee shall find faith on the earth? To which wee may answer, surely very little. Luk. 18. 8.

Phil. Now according to your promise, shew this thing also by examples.

Theol. In the first age of the world all flesh had so corrupted their wayes, that God could no longer beare them, but even vowed their destruction by the overflowing of waters. When the Floud came, how few were found faithfull? Eight persons onely were saved by the Arke. How few righteous were found in Sodome, and the Cities adjoyning? But one poore Lot and his family. How few beleevers were found in Jericho? But one Rahab. How few of the old Israelites

Heb. 3. 19. elders entred into the Land of Promise? But two, Caleb and Joshua: the rest could not enter in because of their unbeliefe. The true and visible Church was small during the government of the Judges, as appeareth plentifully in that Booke. In Eliahs time the Church was so small that it did not appeare. 1 Kings 19. In the reigne of the Kings of Israel and Judah the sincere worshippers were very few, as appeareth by all the Prophets. During the captivity, the Church was as the Moone under a cloud, shee was driven into the wildernesse, where shee hid her selfe. During the persecutions of the Greeke Empire by Gog, Magog, and Egypt, they were fewest of all. In Christs time what a silly company did hee begin withall? How were all things corrupted by the Priests, Scribes, and Pharisees? In the beginning of the Apostles preaching there were but few beleevers. After the first six hundred yeeres what an Eclipse was in the Church during the height of Antichrists reigne? How few true worshippers of God were in the world for the space almost of seven hundred yeeres? Since the Gospel was preached and spread abroad how few doe beleeve? Esay 53. 1. And as the Prophet saith, Lord, who hath beleeved our report? Thus then

you

you see it is apparent (both by Scripture, reason, and examples of all ages) that the number of the Elect is very small, and when all comes to all few shall be saved.

Phil. I pray you tell us how few, and to what scantling they may be reduced; whether one of an hundred, or one of a thousand shall be saved.

Theol. No man knowes that; neither can I give you any direct and certaine answer unto it. But I say, that in comparison of the Reprobate there shall but a few be saved. For all that professe the Gospel are not the true Church before God. There bee many in the Church which are not of the Church.

Phil. How doe you prove that?

Theol. Out of the ninth to the Romans, where the Apostle saith, All are not Israel that are of Israel. And again Esay cryeth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel were as the sand of the sea, yet but a remnant shall be saved, Rom. 9. 27. Rom. 9. 6.

Phil. How doe you ballance it in the visible Church, or in what comparison doe you take it? let us here some estimate of it. Some thinke one of an hundred, some, but one of a thousand shall be saved.

Theol. Indeed I have heard some learned and godly Divines give such con-

conjectures: but for that matter I can say nothing to it. But only let us observe the comparison of the holy Ghost betwixt a remnant and the sand of the Sea, and it will give some light into the matter.

Rom. 9. 27.

Phil. Doth not the knowledge of this doctrine discourage men from seeking after God?

Theol. Nothing lesse. But rather it ought to awake and stirre up in us a greater care of our salvation, that we may be in the number of Christs little flock, which make an end of their salvation in feare and trembling.

Phil. 2. 12

Phil. Some make light of all these matters. Others say, As for the life to come, that is the least matter of an hundred to be cared for. As for that matter, they will leave it to God, even as pleaseth him: they will not meddle with it. For they say, God that made them must save them. They hope they shall doe as well as others, and make as good shift as their neighbours.

Theol. It is lamentable that men should be so careleſſe, and make so light of that which (of all other things) is most weighty and important. For what shall it profit a man though hee should win the whole world, if hee lose his soule? as the Author of all wisedome testifieth, Mat. 16. 26.

Asan. I pray you, Sir, under correcti-

on,

on, give me leave to speake my mind in this point. I am an ignorant man, pardon mee if I speake amisse, for a fooles bolt is soone shot.

Theol. Say on.

Asun. I doe verily thinke that God is stronger than the Divell. Therefore I cannot beleeve that hee will suffer the Divell to have more than himselfe. He will not take it at his hands. He loveth mankind better than so.

Theol. You doe carnally imagine that God doth wrestle and strive with the Divell about the matter. As for Gods power it doth never crosse his will: for God can doe nothing against his will and decree, because hee will not.

Asun. Yea, but the Scripture saith, God will have all men saved.

Theol. That is not meant of every particular man, but of all sorts some, some Jewes, some Gentiles, some rich, some poore, some high, some low, &c.

Asun. Christ died for all: therefore all shall be saved.

Theol. Christ died for all in sufficiencie of his death, but not in efficacie unto life. For onely the Elect shall bee saved by his death: as it is written, This is my blood in the New Testament, which is given for you; meaning his Disciples and chosen children. And againe, Christ being consecrated, Luke 22.20.

is made the Author of salvation to all that obey him.

Asin. God is mercifull, and therefore I hope he will save the greatest part for his mercy sake.

Theol. **The greatest part shall perish: but all that shall be saved, shalbe saved by his mercy: as it is written,** Rom. 9. **He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardneth. And againe,** It is not in him that willeth, or him that runneth, but in God that sheweth mercy. **Therefore though God be infinite in mercy, and Christ infinite in merit, yet none shall have mercy but only the vessels of mercy.**

Anth. Can you tell who shall be saved, and who shall be damned? Do you know Gods secrets? When were you in heaven? When spake you with God? I am of the mind that all men shall bee saved: For Gods mercy is above all his works. Say you what you will, and what you can, God did not make us to condemne us.

Theol. **You are very peremptory indeed: you are more bold then wise: for Christ saith, Few shall bee saved: you say, All shall be saved. whether then shall we believe, Christ or you?**

Anth. If there should come two soules, one from heaven and another from hell, and bring us certaine newes how the case stood, then I would beleeve it indeed.

Theol.

Theol. Put case two soules of the dead should come, the one from heaven, the other from hell, I can tell you aforehand certainly what they would say, and what newes they would bring.

Antil. What, I pray?

Theol. They would say there be few in heaven, and many in hell: heaven is empty, and hell is full.

Antil. How know you that? how know you they would say so?

Theol. I am sure, if they speak the truth, they must needs say so.

Antil. Must they needs? Why, I pray you, must they needs?

Theol. Because the word of God saith so. Because Moses and the Prophets say so. If you will not beleeve Moses and the Prophets, neither will you beleeve though one, though two, though an hundred should rise from the dead.

Antil. Yes but I would.

Theol. I pray you let me aske you a question: whether do you thinke that God and his word, or the soules of dead men, are more to be credited?

Antil. If I were sure that God said so, then I would beleeve it.

Theol. If his word say so, doth not he say so? Is not he and his word all one?

Antil. Yes for all that if I might

heare

heare God himselfe speake it, it would move me much.

Theol. You shew your selfe to be a notable Infidell. You will not beleeve Gods word without signes, and miracles, and wonders from the dead.

Anil. You speak as though you knew certainly that hell is full: you doe but speake at randome: you cannot tell you were never there to see. But for mine owne part, I beleeve there is no hell at all, but onely the hell of a mans conscience.

Theol. Now you shew your selfe in deede what you are. You say you beleeve no hell at all. And I thinke, though you were well examined, you beleeve no heaven at all, neither God nor Divell.

Anil. Yes, I beleeve there is a heaven, because I see it with mine eyes.

Theol. You doth beleeve no more
Ioh.20.29. belike than you see: but Blessed are they that beleeveth, and seeth not. You are one of the rankest Atheists that ever I talked withall.

Anil. You ought not so judge: you know not much hereof.

Theol. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, Mat. 12.34. You have sufficiently bewrayed your heart by your words. For the tongue is the key of the minde. Also for judging, I judge you onely by your fruits:

fruits: which is lawfull. For we may fully say, It is a bad tree which bringeth forth bad fruit: and he that doth wickedly, is a wicked man. But it is you, and such as you are, that will take upon you to judge mens hearts. For though a mans outward actions be religious & honest, yet you will condemne him. And if a man give himselfe to the word and prayer, reforme his family, and abstaine from the grosse sins of the world, you will by and by say, He is an Hypocrite. And thus you take upon you to judge mens hearts, as though you knew with what affection these things are done.

Antil. I confesse I am a sinner: and so are all other for ought I know. There is no man but hee may be amended. I pray God send us all of his grace, that we may please him, and get to heaven at last.

Theol. Now you would shuffle up all together, as though you were as good as the best, and as though there were no difference of sinners: but you must learne to know that there is a great difference of sinners. For there is the penitent and the impenitent sinner; the carefull and the careleſſe sinner; the sinner whose sins are not imputed, and the sinner whose sins are imputed; the sinner that shall be

saued, and the sinner that shalbe damned. For it is one thing to sin of frailty, another thing to liue in it, dwell in it, and trade in it, and (as the Holy Ghost speaketh) to suck it in, as the fish suckieth water, and to draw it vnto vs with cart-ropes and cords of vanity.

Esay 5.18.

To conclude therefore; there is as great difference betwixt a sinner and a sinner, as betwixt light and darknesse. For though Gods children bee sinners in respect of the remnants of sin within them, yet the Scriptures call them iust and righteous; because they are iustified by Christ, and sanctified by his grace and holy Spirit. And for this cause it is that S. Iohn saith, He that is borne of God sinneth not, 1 Iohn 4. 6.

Anti. What, I pray you, did you neuer sinne?

Theol. **Yes: and what then? what are you the better?**

Anti. You Preachers cannot agree amongst your selues: one saith one thing, and another saith another thing, so that you bring the ignorant people into a mammering, and they know not on which hand to take.

Theol. **The Preachers, God bee thanked, agree very well together in all the main grounds of Religion, and principall points of saluation. But**

if

if they dissent in some other matters, you are to trie the spirits, whether they be of God or no. You must trie all things, and keepe that which is good.

Antil. How can plaine and simple men trie the spirits and doctrines of the Preachers?

Theol. **Yes, for the Apostle saith,** The spiritual man discerneth all things. 1 Cor. 2.15. **And S. John saith to the holy Christians,** You have received an ointment from that holy One, & know all things; 1 John 2.26 **that is, all things necessary to salvation. Those therefore which have the Spirit of God, can judge and discerne of doctrines, whether they be of God or no.**

Antil. I am not booke-learned, and therefore I cannot judge of such matters. As for hearing of sermons, I have no leisure to goe to them, I have somewhat else to doo. Let them that are bookish, and heare so many sermons, judge of such matters. For I will not meddle with them, they belong not unto me.

Theol. **Yet for all that you ought to reade the Scriptures, and heare the Word of God preached, that you may be able to discerne betwixt truth and falshood in matters of Religion.**

Antil. Belike you thinke none can be saved without preaching, and that all

men stand bound to frequent Sermons: but I am not of your mind in that.

Theol. **Our Lord Jesus saith,** My
John 10.2. sheepe heare my voyce. **And again he**
John 8.47. **saith,** He that is of God heareth Gods Word, Ye therefore here it not, because yee are not of God. **You see therefore how Christ Jesus maketh it a speciall note of Gods children to heare his word preached.**

Antil. But I thinke we may serve God well enough without a Preacher. For Preachers are but men, and what can they doe? A Preacher is a good man so long as he is in the Pulpit: but if hee be out of the Pulpit, hee is but as another man.

Theol. **You speak contemptuously of Gods messengers, and of Gods sacred ordinance. But the Apostle doth fully answer your objection, saying,** Faith
Rom. 10. comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God: and how can they heare without a Preacher? **In which words the Apostle tels you flatly, that you can never have faith, nor serve God aright without preaching.**

Antil. When you have preached all that you can, you can make the Word of God no better than it is: and some put in and put out what they list. The Scriptures are but mens inventions, and they made the Scriptures.

Theol. **Wee preach not to make the**

word better, but to make you better. As for putting in and putting out, it is a meere untruth. And whereas you say, The Scriptures were made by men, it is blasphemie once to thinke it, and you are worthy to receive your answer at Tiburne.

Antil. Now I see you are hot. I perceive for all your godlinesse you will be angry.

Theol. I take it to be no sinne to be angry against sin. For your sin is very great, and who can beare it?

Antil. All this while you speake much for preaching, but you say nothing for prayer. I thinke there is as much need of prayer as preaching. For I find in the Scriptures, Pray continually; but I find not, Preach continually.

Theol. No man denieth but that Prayer is most needfull, alwaies to be joyned unto Preaching and all other holy exercises: for it is the hand-maid to all. But yet we preferre preaching above it, because preaching is both the directer and whet-stone of Prayer: yea, it directeth us aright in all spirituall actions and services whatsoeuer: without the which we can keepe no certaine course, but are ever ready to erre on this hand or that. Now whereas you say you find, Pray continually, but not, Preach continually, you might (if you were not wilfully

blind) and also, Preach continually. For the Apostle saith to Timothie, Be instant, preach the word in season and out of season; that is, alwaies as time and occasion shall serve.

2. Tim. 4. 1.

Anti. You extoll preaching, but you say nothing for reading. I beleeve you condemne reading.

Theol. Doth he that highly commendeth gold condemne silver? I doe ingenuously confesse, that both publike and private reading of the Scriptures is very necessary and profitable, and would to God it were more used then it is: for it is of singular use both to encrease knowledge and judgement, and also to make us more fit to heare the word preached. For such men as are altogether ignorant of the History of the Bible, can heare the word with small comfort.

Phil. It seemes that this man neither regards the one nor the other; because, for ought that I can see, he cares not greatly if the Scriptures were burnt.

Anti. Oh sirrah, you speak very malapertly: you may speake when you are bidden. Who made you a Judge? You are one of his Disciples, and that maketh you to speake of his side.

Phil. No, Sir, I hope I am Christs Disciple, and no mans. But assuredly I cannot hold my peace at your vile cavilling and most blasphemous speeches.

Anti.

Antil. I cry you mercy, Sir, you seeme to be one of these Scripture men: you are of the Spirit: you are so full of it that it runneth out at your nostrils.

Phil. You doe plainly shew your selfe to be a scoffing Ismaelite.

Antil. And you doe plainly shew your selfe to bee one of those folke of God which know their seats in heaven.

Phil. I pray God be mercifull unto you, and give you a better heart: For I see you are in the gall of bitternesse, and in the bond of iniquity.

Antil. You thinke there is none good but such as your selfe, and such as can please your humour. You will forsooth bee all pure. But by God there be a company of pure knaves of you.

Theol. **Now you doe manifestly shew of what spirit you are. For you both swear and raile with one breath.**

Antil. God forgive me. Why did he anger mee then? There be a company of such controllers as he in the world, that no body can be quiet for them.

Theol. **I perceive a little thing will anger you, sith you will be angry with him for speaking the truth.**

Antil. What hath he to doe with me? He is more busie than needs. Why doth he say I am in a bad case? I will not come to him to learne my duty. If I have faults he shal not answer for them, I shall answer for mine owne faults, and

every Fat shall stand on his owne bottome. Let him meddle with that hee hath to doe withall.

Theol. **You are too impatient: you take matters at the worst. We ought friendly, and in love, to admonish one another: for we must have a care one of anothers salvation. I dare say for him, that he speakes both out of love and compassion towards you.**

Antil. I care not for such love. Let him keepe it to himselfe. What doth he thinke of me? doth he suppose that I have not a soule to save as well as he, or that I have no care of my salvation? I would he should know that I have as great care of my salvation as he, though I make not such outward shewes. For all is not gold that glitters. I have as good a meaning as he, though I cannot utter it.

Theol. **These words might well be spared: I hope you will bee pacified, and amend your life, and draw neere to God hereafter.**

Antil. Truely, Sir, you may thinke of me what you please; but I assure you I have more care that way than all the world wonders at, I thanke God for it. I say my prayers every night when I am in my bed: And if good prayers will doe us no good, God helpe us. I have alwayes served God duly and truly, and find him in my mind. I doe as I would

be

be done to. I keepe my Church, and tend my prayers while I am there; and I hope I am not so bad as this fellow would make me. I am sure, if I be bad, I am not the worst in the world, there be as bad as I. If I goe to hell I shall have fellowes, and make as good shift as others.

Theol. **You think you have spoken wisely, but I like not your answer, for your words smell strongly both of ignorance, pride and unbeliefe. For first, you justifie your selfe in your faithlesse and ignorant worship of God. And secondly, you justifie your selfe by comparison with others, because others are as bad as you, and you are not the worst in the world.**

Antil. Now I know you speake of ill will: for you never had any good opinion of me.

Theol. **I would I could have as good an opinion of you as I doe desire, and that I might see that wrought in you which might draw my love and liking towards you. And as for ill will, the Lord knoweth I beare you none. I desire your conversion and salvation with my whole heart, and I would thinke my selfe happy if I might save your soule with the losse of my right arme.**

Antil. I hope I may repent. For the Scripture saith, At what time soever a

sinner doth repent, God wil have mercy on him. Therefore if I may have space, and grace, and time to repent before death, and aske God forgivenesse, and say my prayers, and cry God mercy, I hope I shall doe well enough.

Theol. You speake as though repentance were in your power, and at your commandement, and that you can put it into your owne heart when you list: and that makes you and many others presume of it three houres before death. But you must know that repentance is the rare gift of God, and it is given but to a few. For God will know him well that bestoweth repentance upon, sith it is proper only to the Elect. It is no worldly matter. It is not attained without many and frequent prayers, and much hearing, reading, and meditating in the word of God. It is not so easie a matter to come by as the world judgeth. It is not found but of them that seeke it diligently, and beg it earnestly. It is no ordinary three houres matter. Cry God mercy a little for fashion will not do it. Cursory saying of a few prayers a little before death availeth not. For though true repentance bee never too late, yet late repentance is seldome true. Herein delayes are dangerous: for the longer we defetre it, the worse is our

case.

case. The farther a naile is driven in with a hammer, the harder it is to get out againe. The longer a disease is let run, the harder it is to cure. The deeper a tree is rooted, the harder it is to plucke up againe. The longer wee deferre the time of our repentance, the harder it will bee to repent. And therefore it is dangerous driving it off to the last cast. For an ancient Father saith, We reade but of one that repented at the last, that no man should presume; and yet of one, that none might dispaire. Augustine.

Well then, to conclude this point: I would have you to know that the present time is alwayes the time of repentance. For time past cannot bee recovered, and time to come is uncertaine.

Antil. Sir, in mine opinion you have uttered some very dangerous things, and such as were enough to drive a man to dispaire.

Theol. What be they I pray you?

Antil. There be divers things. But one thing doth most of all sticke in my stomack, and that is the small number that shall be saved, as you say. But I can hardly bee perswaded that God made so many thousands to cast them away when he had done. Doe you thinke that God hath made us to condemne us? Will you make him to

to be the Author of condemnation?

Theol. Nothing lesse. For God is not the cause of mens condemnation, but themselves. For every mans destruction commeth of himselfe: as it is written, O Israel thy destruction is of thy selfe. As for God, he hath (in great mercy) use all possible meanes to save soules, as he saith by the Prophet, What could I have done more to my Vineyard that I have not done unto it? But to come neere to your question: I deny that God hath created the most part of men onely and solely unto perdition, as the proper end which he did aime at in creating them: but he hath created all things for the praise of his glory: as it is written, He hath created all things for himselfe, and the wicked also for the evill day. Then it followeth, that the cause and end why the wicked were created, neither was, nor is the onely destruction of his creature, but his owne praise and glory, that that onely might appeare and shine forth in all his workes. Yet certaine it is that God for just causes (albeit unknowne and hid to us) hath rejected a great part of men. The causes, I say, of reprobation are hid in the eternall counsell of God, and knowne to his godly wisedome onely. They are secret, and hid from us, reserved in his eternall wisedome

Hosea 13.

Esay 5.4.

Pro. 16.4.

to

to be revealed at the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus. His judgements (saith the Scripture) are as a great Deepe, and his wayes past finding out. It is as possible for us to comprehend the Ocean in a little dish, as to comprehend the reason of Gods counsell in this behalfe. Psal. 36. Rom. 11.

Anvil. What reason, justice, or equity is there that sentence of death should bee passed upon men before they bee borne, and before they have done good or evill?

Theol. I told you before that wee can never comprehend the reason of Gods proceeding in this behalfe: yet we must know that his will is the rule of righteousnesse, and must bee unto us in stead of a thousand reasons. For whatsoever God willeth, in as much as he willeth it, it is to be holden just. We cannot conceive the reason of many naturall things, and things subject to sense, as the motion of the celestiall bodies, their unconceiveable swiftnesse, their matter and substance, their magnitude, altitude, and latitude. Wee cannot throughly find out the causes of the thunder, lightning, winds, earth-quakes, ebbings & flowings of the sea, and many other things under the Sun: how then can wee possibly ascend up into the private Chamber and Councell-house

house of God, to sift and search out the bottome of Gods secrets, which no wit or reach of man can any way attaine unto? Let us therefore learn in Gods feare to reverence that which we cannot in this life comprehend.

This one thing I must say unto you, that whatsoever God decreeth, yet doth he execute no man till he hath ten thousand times deserved it. For betwixt the decree and the execution thereof, commeth sin in us, and most just causes of condemnation.

Anti. If God have decreed mens destruction, what can they doe withall? who can resist his will? why then is hee angry with us? For all things must needs come to passe according to his decree and determination.

Theol. First, I answer you with the Apostle: O man, who art thou that pleadest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it. Why hast thou made mee thus? Hath not the Potter power of the clay, to make of the same lumpe one vessell to honour, and another to dishonour? Moreover, I answer, that Gods decree doth not enforce the will of man, which worketh and moveth of it selfe. It hath in it selfe the beginning of evill motion, and sinneth willingly. Therefore, though the decree of God imposeth a necessity upon all secondary causes (so

Rom. 9.22.

as they must needs bee framed and disposed according to the same) yet no coaction or constraint; for they are all carried with their voluntary motion. Even as we see the plumbe of a clock, being the first mover, doth cause all the other wheeles to move, but not to move this way or that way: for in that they move, some one way, and some another, it is of themselves; I meane, of their owne frame: so Gods decree doth move all secondary causes, but takes not away their owne proper motion. For God is the Author of every action, but not of any evill in any action. As the soule of man is the originall cause of all motion in man, as the Philosophers dispute, but yet not of lame and impotent motion, for that is from another cause, to wit, some defect in the body: so, I say, Gods decree is the root and first cause of motion, but not of defective motion, that is from our selves. Likewise, that a bell soundeth, the cause is in him that ringeth it: but that it jarreth, the cause is in it selfe. Againe, that an instrument soundeth, is in him that plaieth upon it; but that it jarreth, is in it selfe: that is, in its own want of tuning. So then, to shut up this point: all instruments and middle causes are so moved of God, being the first Mover, that hee alwayes doth

will

will holily and justly in his moving. But the instruments moved are carried in contrary motions, according to their owne nature and frame: If they be good, they are carried to that which is good: but if they be evill, they are carried unto evill. So that according to the double beginning of motion and will, there is a double and divers worke and effect.

Antil. But from whence comes it that man of himselfe, that is, of his owne free motion, doth will that which is evill?

Theol. From the fall of Adam, whereby his will was corrupted.

Antil. What was the cause of Adams fall?

Theol. The Devill, and the deprauation of his owne will.

Antil. How could his will incline unto evill, it being made good, and he being made good?

Theol. He and his will were made good, yet mutably good. For to be immutably good is proper onely to God. And Adam was told, that he might fall, as the event declared.

Antil. Was not the decree of God the cause of *Adams* fall?

Theol. Not but the voluntary inclination of his will unto evill. For Adams will was neither forced, nor by any violence of Gods purpose compelled

pelled to consent: but he of a free will and ready mind left God, and joyned with the Divell.

Thus then I doe determine, That Adam sinned necessarily, if you respect the decree or event; but if you respect the first mover and inherent cause, which was his owne will, then he sinned voluntarily and contingently. For the decree of God did not take away his will, or the contingency thereof, but only order and dispose it. Therefore (as a learned Writer saith) *Volens peccavit, & proprio motu*; He sinned willingly, and of his owne motion. Beza.

And therefore no evill is to be attributed unto God, or his decree.

Anti. How then doe you conceive and consider of the purpose of God in all these things?

Theol. Thus: That God decreed with himselfe, *uno actu*, at once,

That there should be a Worlde.

That Adam should be created perfect.

That he should fall of himselfe.

That all should fall with him.

That he would save some of the lost race.

That hee would doe it of meere mercy through his Son.

That he would condemne others for sin.

Anti. How doe you prove the decree

decree of reprobation; to wit, that God hath determined the destruction of thousands before the world was?

Theol. **The Scripture calleth the Reprobates,** The vessels of wrath, prepared to destruction: **The Scripture** Rom. 9. 22.
saith, God hath not appointed us unto 2 Thes. 5.
wrath: **Therefore it followeth, that some are appointed unto wrath. The Scripture saith of the Reprobates,** 1 Pet. 2. 8.
that they were even ordained to stumble at the word. **The Scripture saith,** They were of old ordained to this condemnation, *Jude* 4.

Antil. But how answer you this? Ezek. 18.
God wils not the death of a sinner: therefore he hath predestinated none to destruction.

Theol. **God wills not the death of a sinner simply and absolutely, as it is the destruction of his Creature; but as it is a meanes to declare his justice, and to set forth his glory.**

Antil. God did foresee and foreknow, that the wicked would perish through their owne sinne: but yet he did not predestinate them unto it.

Theol. **Gods prescience and foreknowledge cannot be separated from his decree. For whatsoever God hath foreseene and foreknowne in his eternall counsell, he hath determined the same shall come to passe. For as it appertaines to his wisdome to fore-**

know

know and foresee all things: so doth it appertaine to his power to moderate and rule all things according to his will.

Anti. What doe you call prescience in God?

Theol. Prescience in God is that whereby all things abide present before his eyes: so that to his eternall knowledge, nothing is past, nothing to come; but all things are alwaies present: and they are so present, that they are not as conceived imaginations, formes and motions; but all things are alwaies so present before God, that he doth behold them in their verity and perfection.

Anti. How can God justly determine of mens destruction, before they have sinned?

Theol. This objection hath beene answered in part before: For I told you, that God condemneth none but for sin, either originall onely, or else both originall and actuall. For howsoever he doth in himselfe, before all time, determine the reprobation of many, yet hee proceeds to no execution, till there be found in us both just deserts and apparent cause. Therefore they deale unsoundly and foolishly, which confound the decree of reprobation with damnation it selfe; sith sinne is the cause of the one, and onely

only the will of God of the other.

Phil. Well, Sir, such we are so farre proceeded in this question, by the occasion of this mans objections and cavils, I pray you now, as you have spoken much of reprobation, and the causes thereof; so let us heare somewhat of election, and the causes thereof: and shew us out of the Scriptures, that God hath before all worlds chosen some to eternall life.

Theol. Touching the decree of election, there are almost none that make any doubt thereof: therefore small proofe shall serve for this point. Briefly I will confirme it by one or two testimonies out of holy Scripture. First, the Apostle saith, Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spirituall blessings in heavenly things in Christ, as hee hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that wee should be holy, and without blame before him in love. You see the words are very plaine and pregnant for this purpose. Another confirmation is taken out of the 8. Chapter to the Romans, in these words: Those whom he knew before, did hee also predestinate to bee like to the image of his owne Sonne, that hee might bee the first borne of many brethren.

Ephes. 1. 3.

Phil.

Phil. Which be the causes of election?

Theol. **The causes of election are to bee found onely in God himselfe. For his eternall election dependeth neither upon man, neither yet upon any thing that is in man, but is purposed in himselfe, and established in Christ, in whom wee are elected. This is fully proved in these words,** Who hath predestinated us to bee adopted through Jesus Christ in himselfe, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glory, wherewith hee hath made us freely accepted in his beloved. Ephes. 1. 5, 6. **where yee see the Apostle telleth us, that his free grace, and the good pleasure of his will, are the first motives or moving causes of our election.**

Phil. But the Papists fetch the first motive of election out of mans merits, and foreseene workes. For, say they, God did fore-see who would repent, beleeve, and doe well: and therefore hee made choyce of them.

Theol. **But they are greatly deceived: For I say againe and againe, that there is nothing in us which did ever move God to set his love upon us, and to chuse us unto life: but hee ever found the originall cause in himselfe; as it is written,** Hee will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy, and whom hee will he hardneth. Rom. 9. **And**

againe

againe: It is neither in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth: but in God that sheweth mercy. **The Lord himselfe also testifieth, that hee did chuse his people not for any respect in them, but only because he loved them, and bare a speciall favour unto them. So then it is a certaine truth, that Gods eternall predestination excludeth all merits of man, and all power of his will, thereby to attaine unto eternall life; and that his free mercy, and undeserved favour, is both the beginning, the midst, and the end of our salvation: that is to say, All is of him, and nothing of our selves.**

Deut. 7. 7.

Phil. Whether then doth faith depend upon election, or election upon faith? That is, whether did God chuse us because we doe beleeve? or whether doe we beleeve because we are chosen?

Theol. **Out of all doubt, both faith and all fruits of faith doe depend upon election. For therefore wee beleeve because wee are elected; and not therefore elected because wee beleeve: As it is written,** So many as were ordained to everlasting life, beleeved.

Act. 13. 48.

Antil. If men be predestinate before they bee borne, to what purpose serve all precepts, admonitions, lawes? &c. It forceth not how we live. For neither our godly or ungodly life can alter the purpose of God.

Theol.

Theol. This is a very wicked and carnall objection, and sheweth a vile and dissolute minde in them that use it. But I would wish such men to consider the end of election; which is, that we should lead a godly life: As it is plainly set downe in the first to the Ephesians, vers. 3. where the Apostle saith, God hath chosen us before the foundation of the world. But to what end? that we should live as we list? No, no, saith hee; But that wee should bee holy and unblameable before him. Againe he saith, wee are predestinate to be made like the image of his Sonne, that is, to bee holy and righteous. For most certaine it is, that wee can judge nothing of predestination, but by the consequents: that is, by our calling, justification, and sanctification. For when once we feele the worke of grace within us (that is, that we are washed by the new birth, and renued by the holy Ghost, finding in our selves an unfained hatred of sinne, and love of righteousnesse) then are wee sure, and out of all doubt, that we are predestinated to life. And it is even as much as if God had personally appeared unto us, and whispered us in the eare, and told us that our names are taken, and written in the booke of life. For whom he hath predestinate, them Rom. 8. 16.

Rom. 8. 30. them hee hath called: and whom hee hath called, them hee hath justified: and whom hee hath justified, them hee hath glorified. Now therefore, till wee feele these markes of election wrought in us, wee can bee at no certainty in this point; neither are wee to take any notice of it, or meddle in it: but wee must strive, according to that power and faculty wee have, to live honestly, and civilly, waiting when God will have mercy on us, and give us the true touch. As for them that are careleſſe and diſſolute, ſetting all at ſix and ſeven, there is ſmall hope that they are elected, or ever ſhall be called.

Anti. I thinke the preaching and publiſhing of this doctrine of predeſtination, hath done much hurt: and it had beene good it had never beene knowne to the people, but utterly concealed. For ſome it driveth to deſpaire, and others it maketh more ſecure and careleſſe.

Theol. You are in a great errour: for this doctrine is part of Gods revealed Truth, which hee would have knowne to his people. And in good ſooth, it is of very great and comfortable uſe to the Children of God, againſt all the aſſaults of the Devill, and temptations of deſperation whatſoever. For when a man hath once in

in truth felt, by the effects, that God hath chosen him to life, then though the Divell lye sore at him, and the conscience of sinne and his owne frailties doe vehemently assault him; yet he knoweth certainly that the eternall purpose and counsell of God is immutable, and that because his salvation is not grounded upon himselfe, or his owne strength, but upon the unchangeable decree of God, which is a foundation immoveable, and alwayes standing sure and firme: therefore doe the Divell and sin what they can, yet hee shall be upheld in righteousnesse and truth, and even (as it were) borne up in the armes of God even to the end. For whom God loveth, to the end hee loveth them. Moreover, when once the Lords people perceive (by their sanctification and new birth) both that the Lord hath rejected & reprobated so many thousand thousands, and made choyce of them to bee heires of his most glorious Kingdome, being in themselves of the same mould and making that others are, and that hee hath done all this of his free grace and undeserved mercy towards them: oh how doth it ravish their hearts with the love of him! Againe, how frankely and cheerefully doe they serve him! how willingly and faithfully doe they obey

him! Yea, how are they wholly rapt, and inflamed with the desire of him! For it is the perswasion and feeling of Gods love towards us, that draweth up our love to him againe; as S. John saith, 1 Joh. 4. Wee love him, because he hath loved us first.

Luk. 7. Moreover, it is said of Mary Magdelen, that she loved much, because much was forgiven. For after she felt her many & great sins freely pardoned, her affections were kindled with the love and obedience of Christ. So likewise the Church in the Canticles, after shee had beene in the banquetting house of all spirituall grace, and felt the banner of Christs love displayed upon her, forthwith shee was rapt therewith, and cryed out (as it were in a swoun) that shee was sicke of love. Cant. 2.5. So againe, when Christ put in his hand by the hole of the doore (that is, touched the very inward parts of her heart by his spirit) then her heart yearned, and her bowels were affectioned towards him. This is it which S. Paul prayeth for upon his knees, Eph. 3.18,19 that it may be granted to the Ephesians, that they may bee able to comprehend with all the Saints, what is the breadth and length, height and depth of Gods love towards us, and to know the love of Christ (which passeth knowledge) and

and to bee filled with all fulneſſe of God. Thus then you ſee the great and comfortable uſe of this doctrine of election, both in that it miniſtreth ſtrength and comfort againſt all temptations, as alſo becauſe it conſtraineth us to love God, and of very love to feare him, and obey him.

Phil. Well Sir, I think now you have ſpent time enough in anſwering the objections and cavils of *Antilegon*. In all which I do obſerve one thing; that there is no end of cavilling and objecting againſt the truth: and that a man may object more in an houre, than a learned man can well anſwer in a day.

Theol. You ſay truth. And the reaſon hereof is, becauſe men have ſinne in them out of meaſure, and the ſpirit of God but in meaſure. Therefore they can by the one object and conceive more againſt the truth, then by the other they ſhall be able to anſwer and ſay for it.

Phil. It appeareth indeed, that errors be infinite, and objections innumerable, and that there is no end of mens cavilling againſt Gods ſacred truth. It is good for us therefore to be thorowly ſettled in the truth, that we bee not entangled or ſnared with any cavils or ſophiſtications whatſoever. And I doe verily thinke (notwith-

ſtanding all his objections, and exceptions (that he doth in his conſcience deſire with *Balaam*, to dye the death of the righteous, and to bee as one of them whom he ſeemeth to deſpiſe.

Theol. **I am ſo yet ſwaded too. For this is the triumph that vertue hath ober vice, that where ſhee is moſt hated, there ſhee is often deſired and wiſhed for. And this is the great puniſhment that God bringeth upon the wicked**; *Virtutem ut videant, intabeſcantque relictâ*, **as ſaith the Poet**; That they ſhall ſee vertue, and pine away, having no power to follow it.

Phil. But now let us returne to the point we were in hand with, before wee fell into theſe objections and cavils: which was concerning the ſmall number of them which ſhall bee ſaved: and as you have ſhewed us many reaſons thereof, ſo proceed to ſpeake yet more unto that point.

Theol. **As I have ſhewed you of ſundry lets, both within us and without us, which doe keep us backe from God, and hold us faſt in our ſins: So now, unto all that hath been ſaid before, I will adde nine great hinderances unto eternall life, which may not unfitly be termed nine barres out of heaven, and nine gates into hell.**

Phil. Which be they?

Theol. **They be theſe:**

In-

Nine gates into hell.

Infidelity,
Presumption of Gods mercy.
Examples of the multitude.
Long custome of sinne.
Long escaping of punishment.
Hope of long life.
Conceitednesse.
Ill company.
Evill examples of Ministers.

Phil. These indeed be strong barres out of heaven, and wide gates into hell. I pray you therefore prove them out of the Scriptures, and lay them forth somewhat more largely.

Theol. **The first, which is Infidelity, is proved out of the fourth chapter to the Hebrewes, vers. 2. where it is written,** Unto us was the Gospel preached, as unto them: but the word which they heard, profited them not, because it was not mixed with faith in those that heard it. **And again,** Heb. 3. 19. They could not enter in, because of unbeleefe. **Here wee see, that unbeleefe did bar out the old people from entring into the land of Promise, which was a figure of Gods eternall Kingdome. And sure it is, that the same unbeleefe doth barre out thousands of us. For many will beleeve nothing but their owne fantasies. They will not beleeve the Word of God: especially when it is contrary to their lusts and likings,**

profits and pleasures. Though things bee manifestly proved to their faces, and both the Chapter and the Verse shewed them, yet will they not beleeve; or though they say they beleeve, yet will they never goe about the practice of any thing, but reply against God in all their actions. And, for the most part, when God saith one thing, they will say another: when God saith yea, they will say nay, and so give God the lie. Some againe will say, If all be true that the Preachers say, then God help us. Thus you see how infidelity doth barre men out of heaven, and cast them into hell.

Phil. Let us heare of the second gate, which is, *Presumption of Gods mercy.*

Theol. This is set downe in the 29. of Deuteromonie, where the Lord saith thus, When a man heareth the words of this curse, and yet flattereth himselfe in his heart, saying, I shall have peace although I walke according to the stubburnnesse of mine owne heart, thus adding drunkennesse to thirst (that is, one sin to another) the Lord will not be mercifull unto him, but the wrath of the Lord and his jealousie shall smoake against that man, and every curse that is written in this booke shall light upon him, and the Lord shall put out his name from under heaven.

Here wee see how the mighty God doth

doth thunder downe upon such as goe on in their sins, presuming of his mercy, and saying in their hearts, If I may have but a Lord have mercy upon me three houres before death, I care not. But it is just with God, when these three houres come, to shut them up in blindnesse, and hardnesse of heart, as a just plague for their presumption. Therefore the Prophet David, seeing the grievousnesse of this sinne, prayeth to be delivered from it: Keep me, O Lord (saith he) from presumptuous sins, let them not reigne over me. Let all men therefore take heed of presumptuous sinnes. For though God be full of mercy, yet will he shew no mercy to them that presume of his mercy. But they shall once know, to their cost, that justice goeth from him as well as mercy. Psal. 19.

Phil. Let us come to the third gate, which is, the *Example of the multitude.*

Theol. This is proved in the 23. of Exodus, vers. 22. where the Lord saith flatly, Thou shalt not follow a multitude to doe evill. In another place the Lord saith, After the doing of the land of Egypt, wherein yee dwelt, shall ye not doe; and after the manner of the land of Canaan, whither I will bring you, shall yee not doe, neither walke in their ordinances. Levit. 18. 3.

Against this law did the children

of Israel offend, when they said in the stubbornnesse of their heart to the Prophet Jeremie, The word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord we will not heare, but we will doe whatsoever goeth out of our mouth, and we will doe as we have done, both we and our Fathers, our Kings, and our Princes, in the Cities of Judah, and the streets of Jerusalem, Jer. 44. 16.

Note here how they doe altogether refuse the Word of the Lord, and how they follow the example of the multitude, wee see in these our dayes by lamentable experience how thousands are violently carried down the streame and for defence of it some will say, Doe as the most men do, and the fewest will speake ill of you: which is a very wicked speech. For if we will follow the course of the most, we shall have the reward of the most, which is eternall perdition.

Let us therefore take heed of bending with the sway: for the sway of the world doth weigh down all things that can be spoken out of the Word of God, and openeth a very wide passage into hell.

Phil. Proceed to the fourth gate into hell, which is, the *Long custome of sinne.*

Theol. This is noted by the Prophet Jeremy to bee a very dangerous thing.

thing. For hee saith, Can the blackmoore change his skin, or the Leopard his spots? Then may ye also doe good, which are accustomed to do evill. Noting thereby, that it is as hard a matter to leave an old custome of sinne, as to wash a Blackmoore white, or to change the spots of a Leopard, which because they are naturall is most impossible. So when men through custome have made liveing, lying, adultery, and drunkennesse (as it were) naturall unto them, oh how hard it is to leave them! For custome maketh another nature, and taketh away all sense and feeling of sinne. Jer. 13. 23.

Phil. Let us heare of the fifth gate, which is, the *Long escaping of punishment.*

Theol. This is vttered by the wise man in these words, Because sentence against an evill worke is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts of the children of men are set in them to doe evill. Where he sheweth, that one cause why men are so hardened in their sins, is, because God winketh at them, and letteth them alone, not punishing them immediatly after they have sinned. For if God should forthwith strike downe one, and raine fire and brimstone upon another, and cause the earth to swallow up a third, then men would feare indeed. But Eccles. 8. 11.

it hath beene shewed before, that God taketh not that course, but though he meet with some in this life, yet he lets thousands escape; and that makes them more bold, thinking they shall never come to their answer: even as an old theefe, which hath a long time escaped both prison and gallowes, thinkes he shall alwayes so escape, and therefore goeth boldly on in his theeks. But let men take heed. For as the Proverb saith, Though the Pitcher goeth long to the Well, yet at last it commeth broken home. So though men escape long, yet they shall not escape alwayes: for, there will come a day of reckoning a day that will pay it home for all. Thus you see how impunity leadeth numbers to destruction: that is, when men are let alone, and neither smitten by the hand of God, nor punished by the Law of the Magistrate.

Phil. Let us come to the sixth gate, which is the *Hope of long life.*

Theol. This is affirmed by our Lord Jesus concerning that rich worldling, who, when hee felt the world come in upon him with full streame, said he would pull downe his barnes, and build greater, and say to his soule, Soule, thou hast much goods laid up for many yeers: live at ease, eat, drinke, and take thy pastime. But

Luke 12.19.

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our Saviour calleth him foole for flattering himselfe in security and promising unto himselfe long life. Moreover, he plainely told him that the same night he should make a hellish and miserable end. Note, I pray you, how Jesus Christ, the fountaine of all wisedome, calleth this man a foole, and yeeldeth a reason thereof; to wit, because he gathered riches to himselfe, and was not rich in God: he had great care of this life, and none at all for that which is to come. So then it followeth, that all such are right fooles indeed, and may be chronicled for fooles (how wise soever they be taken and reputed in the world) which have much care for their bodies, and none for their soules; great care for this life, and little for that which is to come. Well, let all such prophane worldlings as dreame and dote of long life (and therefore deferre the day of their repentance and conversion unto God) take heed by this mans example, that they reckon not without their host, and be suddenly snatcht away in the midst of all their pleasures and jollities; as Job saith, Some die in their full strength, being in all ease and prosperity: Their breasts run full of milke, and their bones run full of marrow. Wee see therefore how dangerous a thing it is for men to flatter Job. 21. 13.

flatter and sooth up themselves with hope of long life.

Phil. Proceed to the seventh gate, which is, *Conceitednesse.*

Theol. This is indeed a very broad gate into hell. For the Scripture
Pro.26.12. saith, Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a
Pro.26.16. foole than of such a one. And againe The foole is wiser in his owne eyes, than seven men that can give a sensible reason. The holy Ghost wee see affirmeth, that such as are puft up with an overweening of their owne gifts, are farthest of all other from the kingdome of heaven. For they despise the wisedome of God to their owne destruction. They hold scorne to bee taught; they will say they know as much as all the Preachers can tell them. For what can all the Preachers say more than this? we are all sinners, wee must bee saved by Christ, we must doe as wee would bee done to. There is no more, but doe well, and habe well, &c. Alas poore soules, they looke aloft, they are desperately hoven up with conceitednesse, not knowing that they
Rev.3.17. are poore, naked, blind, and miserable.

These men trust altogether to their owne wit, learning, policie, riches, and great reputation in the world.

world. And because all men crouch to them, and clap their hands at them, therefore they swell like Turkie Cocks, set up their feathers and draw their wings upon the ground with a kind of snuffe and disdaine of all men, as if they were the onely wights of the world. Moreover when men doe praise them for their naturall gifts, soothe them, and applaud them, then it is a wonder to see how they streake themselves, as though they would forthwith take their flight, and mount unto the clouds. But let all insolent and conceited men hearken unto the woe that is pronounced against them by the eternall King of glory, saying, Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their owne sight. Againe, let them hearken to the counsell of God, which saith, Trust unto the Lord with all thine heart, but leane not unto thine owne wisedome. Bee not wise in thine owne eyes, but feare God, and depart from evill. These silly conceited fooles thinke that because they have the cast of this life, and can cunningly compasse the things of this world and goe through stitch with them, therefore they can compasse heaven also by their fine wits, and deepe devices: but alas, poore wretches, they

Esay 5.21.

Pro. 3.5.

are

are greatly and grossely deceived. For the wisedome of the world is foolishnesse with God, and he catcheth the wise in their owne craftinesse. And
1 Cor. 3. 19. 1 Cor. 1. 19. againe the Lord saith, I will destroy the wisdome of the wise, and will cast away the understanding of the prudent. Let not these men therefore stand too much in their owne light, let them not trust to their owne policies: for they are all but as an ice of one nights freezing, which will deceive them that trust unto it. Let them therefore become fooles in themselves, that God may make them wise. Let them denie themselves, that God may acknowledge them. Let them be humbled in themselves, that God may exalt them. For assuredly there is no use, after this life, of the most exquisite wisedome of flesh, it all endeth when we
Eccles. 2. 16. end. For how dieth the wise man? Even as dieth the foole, saith the Holy Ghost. And where all worldly wisedome endeth, there all heavenly wisedome beginneth. Thus therefore we see what a wide gate into hell Conceitednesse is, and how many enter in thereat.

Phil. Now let us understand of the eighth gate into hell, which is, *Ill Company.*

Theol. The Spirit of God foreseeing the great danger of this, and knowing

knowing how ready we are to bee carried away with ill company, doth give us most earnest warning to take heed of it as a most dangerous thing. Enter not (saith hee) in the way of the wicked, and walke not in the way of evill men. Avoid it, goe not by it, turne from it, and passe by. The reason hereof is yeelded in another place, where it is said, A companion of fooles shall be made worse. Let men therefore take heed of ill company, for many thereby have beene brought to the gallowes, and have confessed upon the ladder, that ill company hath brought them unto it, and therefore have admonished all by their example to take heed and beware of lewd company. Moreover the Scripture saith, He that followeth vaine companions shall be filled with poverty. And againe in the same Chapter, He that keepeth company with banquetters shameth his father. Let us therefore say with David, I am a companion of all them that feare God, and keepe his commandements. And on the contrary let us say with him, I have not haunted with vaine persons, neither kept company with the dissemblers. I hate the assembly of the evill, and have not accompanied with the wicked. Let us therefore by Davids example shun the company of the wicked: for as a man is,

Pro. 4. 14.

Pro. 13. 20.

Pro. 28. 19.

Psa. 119 63.

Psal. 26.

is, so is his company. It is the surest note to discerne a man by. For as all unlike things are unsociable, so all like things are sociable. Herein let us beware we deceive not our selves with vaine words, and an opinion of our owne strength, as if we were as strong as Christ, and could not bee drawne away with any company. No no, we are more apt to bee drawne than to draw; to bee drawne to evill by others, than to draw others to good: therefore God saith by his Prophet, Let them returne unto thee, but returne not thou unto them. Undoubtedly he is an odde man that is not made worse with ill company. For can a man touch pitch and not bee defiled therewith? Can a man carry coales in his bosome and not bee burnt? Daily and lamentable experience sheweth, that many of them which thinke themselves strong are this way most grievously smutted. Let a man thinke therefore hee never abandoneth evill, till hee abandon ill company. For no good is concluded in this Parliament. For ill company is the suburbs of hell. Furthermore, it is to be observed, that some, upon admonitions and some inward compunctions of their owne conscience, doe leave their sins untill they have new provocations, and untill

Jer. 15. 16.

till they come amongſt their old copeſ-mates and ſin-companions, and then are they carried backe againe to their old byas, and return to their folly, as a dog returneth to his vomit. For we ſee ſome, which otherwiſe are of good natures and diſpoſitions, moſt pitifully and violently carried away with ill company. For even as greene wood of it ſelfe is unapt to burne, yet being laid on the fire with a great deale of ſeare wood, it burneth as faſt as the reſt: So many toward youths, which of themſelves are not ſo prone unto evill as others, yet with this violent ſtream and bluſtering tempeſt of ill company are carried cleane away. Pro. 26. 11.

Phil. Let us come to the laſt gate, which is, the *Evill examples of Miniſters.*

Theol. It grieveth me, and I am almoſt aſham'd to ſpeak of this point: for is it not a woefull and lamentable thing that any ſuch ſhould be found amongſt the ſons of Levi? Is it not a ſorre, that the Miniſters of Chriſt ſhould bee of a ſcandalous converſation? For if the eye be darke how great is the darkneſſe? If they be examples of all evill to the flock, which ſhould be patterns, lights, and examples of all goodneſſe, muſt it not needs ſtrengthen the hands of the wicked, ſo as they cannot returne from their wickednesse?

wickednesse? But this is an old disease and evill sicknesse, which hath always beene in the Church. The Prophet Jeremy both most grievously complaine of it in his time, and saith, That from the Prophets of Jerusalem is wickednesse gone forth into all the land. For both the Prophet and the Priest doe wickedly. I have seene (saith he) in the Prophets of Jerusalem filthinesse. They commit adultery, and walke in lies: they strengthen also the hands of the wicked, that none can returne from his wickednesse: they are all unto me as Sodome, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah. And in the ninth verse of the same Chapter he sheweth, that it was no pleasure or joy unto him so publikely to reprove them, but that he did it with exceeding griefe, as being forced thereunto, both in regard of Gods glory, and the good of the Church. His words are these, Mine heart breaketh within me, because of the Prophets, and all my bones shake. Moreover, in the same Chapter is set downe how the Lord would feed them with wormwood, and make them drinke the water of gall, and sundry other wayes plague them for their flatteries, seducements, corrupt doctrine, and evill example of life.

Jer. 23. 14.

Phil. Most certaine it is that the evill example

example of Ministers, and especially of Preachers, is very dangerous and offensive: for thereby thousands are hardened in their sins. For men will say, Such a Minister, and such a Preacher doth thus and thus, and therefore why may not we doe so too? They are learned, and know the Word of God, therefore if it were evill I hope they would not doe it: for they should be lights unto us, and give us good examples. Therefore sith they doe such things, we cannot tell what to thinke, or what to say to the matter: they bring such simple folke as we are into a mammering.

Theol. Oh that I could with the Prophet Jeremy quake and shake to thinke of these matters! Oh that I could mourn as a Dove in penning of it! Oh that I had in the wildernesse a cottage, and could with Job be a brother to the Dragons, and a companion to the Ostriches, whilest I have any thoughts of these things! Oh that I could weepe and mourn without sin, before I yeeld you an answer! For weep indeed I may, but answer I cannot. Alas (with much griefe I speake it) all is too true that you say, and herein the people have a vantage against us, if I may call it a vantage. But let this be my answer: If the blind leade the blind, both shall fall

Mat.15.14. fall into the ditch. Blind guids and blind people shall perish together. If because wee are wicked they will bee more wicked, then both they and wee shall burne in hell fire together. Then let them reckon their gaines, and see what they have got. They have small cause to triumph over us: for thereby their market is never a whit amended. Let them take this for answer. And let us that are the Ministers of Christ, and Preachers of the Gospel, looke narrowly to our selves, and make straight steps to our feet: for if we tread never so little awry, we may see how many eyes are upon us. Let us therefore with David pray continually, Order my goings, O Lord, that my foot-steps slip not: for when my foot slipped they rejoyced against me. And as for the people, let them follow the examples of those which walke unblameably (as God bee thanked some such there bee) and let them flie the examples of such as are offensive. So shall God have more glory, and they more peace in their owne hearts. Thus have wee heard what a wide gate is opened into Hell by the evill example of Ministers, and especially of Preachers.

Phil. Well, sith there be so many bars out of heaven, and so many gates into hell,

hell, it is a very hard matter to breake thorow all these bars, and so to enter into life; and as hard a matter to misse all these gates, and to escape hell. Hee quits him well that can doe it.

Theol. **True indeed. And as hard a thing as that is, so hard a thing is it for flesh and bloud to enter into the kingdome of heaven. And yet most men make light of it, and thinke it is the easiest matter of a hundred.**

Asun. As hard as it is, yet I hope by the grace of God I shall be one of them that shall enter in. For so long as I doe as I would be done to, and say no body no harme, nor do no body no harm, God will have mercy on my soule. And I doubt not but my good deeds shal weigh against my evill deeds, and that I shall make even with God at my later end. For, I thanke God for it, I have alwaies lived in his feare, and served him with a true intent. Therefore I know that so long as I keep his commandements, and live as my neighbours do, & as a Christian man ought to do, he will not damn my soule.

Theol. **Can you then keepe Gods Commandements?**

Asun. As neere as God will give me grace.

Theol. **Nay, but I aske you whether you keepe them or no?**

Asun. I doe assay to keepe them as neere as I can. I doe my true intent.

Though

Though I keepe them not all, yet I am ſure I keepe ſome of them.

Theol. **Becauſe you ſay you keepe ſome of them, I pray you let me bee ſo bold with you as to examine you in the particulars. You know the firſt Commandement is this:** Thou ſhalt have none other Gods in my ſight. **How ſay you, doe you keepe this?**

Aſun. I am out of all feare of it. For I never worſhipped any God but one. I am fully perſwaded there is but one God.

Theol. **What ſay you to the ſecond Commandement?** Thou ſhalt not make to thy ſelfe any graven image, &c.

Aſun. I never worſhipped any images in my life, I defie them, I know they cannot help me, for they be but ſtocks and ſtones.

Theol. **What ſay you to the third Commandement? which is this,** Thou ſhalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vaine, &c.

Aſun. Nay certainely, I was never counted a ſwearer in my life, but I have ſerved God alwaies of a child, and have had a good faith in him ever ſince I could remember; I would be ſorrie elſe.

Theol. **What ſay you then to the fourth Commandement?** Remember that thou keepe holy the Sabbath day, &c.

Aſun.

Asun. Nay, for that matter I keepe my Church as well as any man in the parish where I dwell, and mind my prayers as well when I am there. I thanke God for it (though I say it my selfe) I have beene alway well given, and have loved Gods word with all my heart; and it doth mee good to heare the Epistles and Gospels read every Sunday by our Vicar.

Theol. **Tell me, what say you to the 5 Commandement: which is**; Honour thy Father and thy Mother, &c. **Doe you keepe this?**

Asun. I have alwaies loved and obeyed my father and mother from my heart. I hope there is no body can accuse me for that: and I am sure, if I keepe any commandement, it is this. For when I was a boy, every body said that I was well given, and a toward child. Therefore if I should not keep this Commandement, it would bee a great griefe to mee, and goe as neere my heart, as any thing that came to mee this seven yeeres.

Theol. **What say you to the 6 Commandement:** Thou shalt not kill?

Asun. It were strange if I should not keepe that.

Theol. **what say you to the seventh:** Thou shalt not commit adultery?

Asun, I thanke God for it, I was never given to women. God hath alwaies kept

kept mee from that; and I hope, will so ſtill.

Theol. **What ſay you to the eighth:** Thou ſhalt not ſteale?

Aſun. I am neither whoore-maſter nor theefe.

Theol. **What ſay you to the ninth:** Thou ſhalt not beare falſe witneſſe? &c.

Aſun. I deſie all falſe witneſſe bearing from my heart.

Theol. **What ſay you to the laſt:** Thou ſhalt not covet?

Aſun. I thanke God for it, I never coveted any mans goods but mine own.

Theol. **Now I perceive, you are a wonderfull man; you can keepe all the Commandements. You are like the blind Ruler, which ſaid unto Chriſt,** All theſe things have I kept from my youth. **I perceive now indeed, that it is no marvell though you make ſo light of preaching: for you have no neede of it. You are whole, you needs not the Phiſitian: you feele no miſerie, and therefore you care not for mercy. For where miſerie is not felt, there mercy is not regarded: but I ſee you need no Saviour.**

Mat. 19. 20.

Aſun. You ſay not well in that, I need a Saviour: and it is my Lord Jeſus that muſt ſave me: for he made me.

Theol. **What need you a Saviour, ſith you are no ſinner?**

Aſun. Yes beleeve me, I am a ſinner.

Wee

We are all sinners; there is no man but he sinneth.

Theol. How can you bee a sinner, sith you keepe all the Commandements?

Asin. Yes, I am a sinner for all that.

Theol. Can you both bee a sinner, and be without sin too? for hee that keepeth the Commandements, is without sinne; which thing you say you doe. But I see how the case standeth; that a great number of such ignorant and sottish men as you are, will in generall say you are sinners, because your conscience telleth you so; but when it commeth to particulars, you know not how you sinne, nor wherein. I pray you therefore, let me lead you thorow the Commandements againe, and deale with you in particulars, that I may bring you to the sight of your sinnes. How say you therefore, doe you upon your knees, every morning and evening, give God thankes for his particular mercies, and manifold favours towards you? And doe you call much upon him privately, and much also with your family? Answer me plainly and simply.

Asin. I cannot say so.

Theol. Then you have broken the first Commandement, which charged us to give God his due worship;

whereof prayer and thankesgiving are a part. So then here, at the very entrance, you are found guilty. Further, I demand of you, whether you never had any by-thoughts in your prayers, and your heart hath not beene upon other matters, even then while you were in prayer?

Asun. I cannot deny that: For it is a very hard matter to pray without by-thoughts.

Theol. Then (by your owne confession) you have broken the second Commandement, which doth command the right manner of Gods worship: that is, that as wee must worship God, so wee must doe it in faith, love, zeale, and pure affections. So that here you are guilty also; because when you pray, your mind is of other matters, and you doe it not in sincerity and truth. Further, I demand of you, whether you did never sweare by your faith, or troth, or by our Lady S. Mary, and such other oathes?

Asun. Yes by S. Mary have I: I must needs confesse it.

Theol. Wee need no further witnesse, your very answer proveth it; for your answer is an oath: therefore here also are you guilty, because you sweare by idols. Further, I demand of you, whether you did never travell

to

to Faires on the Sabbath day, or make bargaines on that day, or take journies, or talke of worldly matters, neglecting holy duties.

Asun. Yes, God forgive me, I have.

Theol. Then are you guilty of the breach of the fourth Commandement, which chargeth us, on paine of death, to spend the Sabbath day in holy and religious duties, both publikely and privately. Further, I demand whether you instruct your wife, children, and servants in the true knowledge of God, and pray with them or no?

Asun. I am sure you would have me speak the truth. I must needs confesse, I do not, neither am I able to do it.

Theol. Then are you guilty of the breach of the fift Commandement, which commandeth all duties of superiours towards their inferiours, and of inferiours towards their superiours, whereof prayers and instructions are a part. Moreover, I demand whether you were ever angry or no?

Asun. Yes, an hundred times in my dayes: and I thinke there is no body but will be angry at one time or other, especially when they have cause.

Theol. Then you have broken the fift Commandement, which chargeth us to avoid wrath, anger, malice, desire of revenge, and all such like

fore-runners unto murder. Furthermore, I aske you, whether you did never looke upon a woman with a lust in your heart?

Asm. Yes, for I thinke there is no man free from thoughts that way. I had thought thoughts had beene free.

Theol. No: thoughts are not free before God; for God knoweth our thoughts, and will punish us, arraign us, and condemne us for thoughts. Men know not thoughts, and therefore can make no lawes against thoughts: but because God is privie to all our most secret thoughts, therefore hee hath made Lawes against them, and will condemne them. Therefore I conclude, that if you have nourished adulterous thoughts in your heart, you are guilty of the breach of the seventh commandment, which forbid both all secret thoughts and provocations whatsoever to adulterie. But further, I demand, whether you did never pilfer, purloine, and steale some small things from your neighbour; as pasture, poultry, conies, apples and such like?

Asm I cannot cleare my self in these things: for I had thought they had been no sin.

Theol. Then have you broken the eight

right Commandement, and stand guilty of eternall death. For God in this Commandement chargeth us to have as great care of our neighbours goods, as of our owne: and not to injure him any manner of way, in thought, word, or deed. Therefore all deceit, pilfring, oppressing, and all unjust dealing with our neighbours goods, is here condemned. Moreover, let mee aske you, whether you did never lie or dissemble?

Asun. Yea assuredly.

Theol. Then have you broken the ninth Commendement: wherein God chargeth us both in our tongue bearing, and all other matters, to speake the plaine truth from our heart: without lying, or dissembling.

Last of all, I demand, whether you did never in your heart desire something that was not your owne: as your neighbours house or ground, kine or sheepe, &c. therein bewraying the discontentment of your heart.

Asun. I am as guilty in this, as in any thing. For God forgive me, I have often desired and lusted after this and that, which was none of mine own, and so have bewrayed my discontentment.

Theol. Then I perceive (by your owne confession) that you are guilty of the breach of all the Commandements.

Asun. I must needs confesse it: for I see now more into that matter then ever I did. I never heard so much before in my life, nor was ever asked any such questions, as you aske me. I had thought many of those things, which you asked mee, had beene no sinnes at all.

Theol. **I could have convicted you in a thousand other particulars, wherein you doe daily, and hourely breake the Law of God. But my purpose was onely to give you a taste of some particular transgressions, and therewithall some little light by the way into the meaning of the Law: that thereby you might bee brought to some better light of your selfe, and might a little perceive in what case you stand before God; and by that little conceive a great deale more.**

Asun. Well: now I doe plainely see, that I have beene deceived, and am not in so good estate before God, as I thought I had beene. Moreover, I see that thousands are out of the way, which thinke they are in a good case before God: whereas indeed they are in blindnesse, and in their sinnes. But Lord have mercy upon us. I doe now plainly see, that I am far from keeping the commandements: and I thinke no man doth keep them.

Theol. **You may sweare it, I warrant**

rant you. For neither S. Paul, David, or the Virgin Mary could ever keep any one of the commandements. I am glad you begin to see into the Law of God, and to have some taste that way. For as a mans knowledge and insight is into the Law, so is his knowledge and insight into himselfe. Hee that hath a deepe insight into the Law of God, hath also a deepe insight into himselfe. Hee that hath no insight into the Law, can have no insight into himselfe. For the Law is that glasse, wherein wee doe behold the face of our soules, before God. The Apostle saith, By the Law commeth the knowledge of sinne. Therefore those which are altogether ignorant of the Law, and never behold themselves in this glasse, doe commit an hundred sinnes a day, which they know not of; and therefore are not grieved for them. For how can a man bee grieved for that which hee knoweth not? But now further, I pray you to give mee leave to aske you some moe questions of the principles of Religion, to the end, that you knowing and feeling your ignorance, may be humbled therewith, bewaile it in time, and seeke after the true knowledge of God. But yet, by the way, I will aske Antilegon a question or two; because I desire to understand

what knowledge hee hath in the grounds of religion. Tell me therefore, Antilegon, what was the reason why Christ was conceived by the holy Ghost.

Anvil. I could answer you, but I will not. What authority have you to examine me? Shew your commission. When I see your warrant, I will answer you: in the meane time, you have nothing to doe to examine mee. Meddle with that you have to doe withall.

Theol. I perceive you are not only ignorant, but wilfull and obstinate, and refuse all instructions. Therefore I will leave you to God, and to your galled conscience. But I pray you Asunetus answer this question, what thinke you, what was the reason that Christ was conceived by the holy Ghost?

Asun. Believe me Sir, that is an hard question. You may aske a wise man that question: For I cannot answer it.

Theol. what say you then to this? who was Christs mother?

Asun. Marry, Sir, that was our blessed Lady.

Theol. what was Pontius Pilate?

Asun. I am somewhat ignorant, I am not book-learned: but if you will have my simple opinion, I think it was the divell. For none but the divell would put our sweet Saviour to death.

Theol.

Theol. **What is the holy Catholike Church, which you doe believe?**

Asun. The communion of Saints, the forgiveneſſe of ſins.

Theol. **What doe you pray for, when you ſay, Thy kingdome come?**

Asun. I doe pray that God would ſend us all of his grace, that we may ſerve him, and doe as we ought to doe, and keep us in a good minde to God-ward, and to have him much in our minde. For ſome (God bleſſe us) have nothing but the Divell in their minde: they doe nothing a Gods name.

Theol. **What is the Sacrament?**

Asun. The Lords Supper.

Theol. **How many Sacraments be there?**

Asun. Two.

Theol. **Which be they?**

Asun. Bread and wine.

Theol. **What is the principall end of your comming to receive the Sacrament?**

Asun. To receive my maker.

Theol. **What is the principall uſe of a Sacrament?**

Asun. The body and blood of Chriſt.

Theol. **What profit and comfort have you by a Sacrament?**

Asun. In token that Chriſt died for us.

Theol. **I can but pity you for your ignorance: for it is exceeding groſſe and palpable. Your anſwers are ſo**

no purpose, and bewray a wonderfull blindneſſe and ſenſeleſneſſe in matters of Religion. I am ſorry that now I have not time and leiſure to let you ſee your folly and extreme ignorance; as alſo to lay open unto you the ſenſe and meaning of the Articles of the Faith, the Lords Prayer, and the Sacraments, and all other the grounds of Chriſtian Religion.

Aſun. What courſe would you wiſh me to take that I may come out of ignorance, and attaine unto the true knowledge of God?

Theol. Surely I would wiſh you to be diligent in hearing of Sermons, and reading the Scriptures, with prayer and humility. Alſo that you would peruſe Catechiſmes, and other good bookes, and eſpecially Virels grounds of Religion, and the workes of the two worthy ſervants of God, Maſter Giffard, and Maſter Perkins; and other mens, that have done great ſervice to the Church, and for whom thouſands are bound to give God thankes. If you take this courſe, you ſhall by Gods grace within a ſhort time grow to ſome good meaſure of knowledge in all the main grounds of Chriſtian Religion.

Phil. I had not thought any man had beene ſo ignorant as I now perceive this man is.

Theol.

Theol. **Yes verily, there bee thousands in his case. And I doe know by experience that many will use the very same answers, or at least very little differing.**

Phil. I warrant you if you had questioned with him of kine or sheep, purchasing of land, taking of leases, or any other matters under the Sunne, you should have found him very ripe and ready in his answers.

Theol. **I am so perswaded too. For let a man talke with worldly men of worldly matters, and their answer is never to seeke. They will talke very freshly with you of such matters, if it be al the day long. For they have a deep insight into earthly things, & do wholly delight to talk of them, being never weary. For it is their joy, their meat, and their drink. But come once to talk with them of Gods matters (as of faith, repentance, regeneration, &c) you shall find them the veriest dullards and dunces in the world. For when speech is had of these things, they are so befogged that they cannot tell where they are, nor what they say.**

Phil. In my judgements such mens case is very pitifull and dangerous: and so is this mans case also, if God doe not very speedily pull him out of it.

Theol. **Questionlesse. For God saith,** My people perish for want of knowledge. [Hos. 4. 6.]

knowledge. Our Lord Jesus saith, that ignorance is the cause of all errours. Mat.22.29. Ye erre, saith he, not knowing the Scriptures. The Apostle saith, that ignorance doth alienate us from the life of God. For, saith he, Ephes.4.18. the Gentiles were darkned in their cogitation, being strangers from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them. So then it is cleere that ignorance is not the Mother of devotion, as the Papists vse avouch; but it is the Mother of errour, death, and destruction, as the Scripture affirmeth. Our Lord foreseeing the great danger of ignorance (how thereby thousands are carried headlong into hell) doth admonish all men to search the Scriptures, which doe testifie of him, that so they might get out of the most dangerous gulfe of ignorance, wherein multitudes are implunged. Therefore the Noble men of Berea Heb.17.11. are commended by the holy Ghost, because they received the word with all readinesse, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Oh therefore that men would earnestly seeke after the knowledge of God in time, and (as the Prophet saith) seek the Lord whilest he may be found, call upon him whilest he is neere, Esa. 55.6.

Phil. I doe see that all ignorance in matters

matters of faith is dangerous, but I thinke wilfull ignorance is of all other most dangerous.

Theol. **Wilfull ignorance (no doubt) is a plain prognostication and demonstrative argument of eternal death: for it is a most horrible and fearfull thing for men to refuse instruction, dispise counsell, harden their hearts, stop their eares, and close up their eyes against God. This is the very upshot of our decay.**

Phil. I pray you what call you hardnesse of heart?

Theol. **An hard heart is that which is neither moved with Gods mercies, nor feared with his judgements; neither feareth the Law, nor regardeth the Gospel; neither is holpen by threatnings, nor softened by chastenings; which is unthankful for Gods benefits, and disobedient to his counsels; made cruell by his rods, and dissolute by his favours; unshamefac't to filthinesse, and fearelesse to perils; uncourteous to men, and forgetfull to God; forgetfull of things past, negligent in things present, and improvident in things to come.**

Phil. Lay forth yet more plainely the state of ignorant and hard-hearted men and shew how lamentable it is.

Theol. **If a man bee outwardly blind, we doe pitty him, and say, There goes**

goes a poore blind man; but if hee be both blind and deafe, doe wee not more pitie him, and say, Oh in how miserable a case is that man! but if hee bee both blind, deafe, and dumb, doe wee not most of all pity him, and say, Oh, that man is in a most woefull taking, and in a most pitifull plight!

How much more then are they to be pitied, which, as concerning their soules, are both blind, deafe, and dumb? For the diseases of the soule are farre more dangerous and more to be pitied than those of the body.

Would it not pity a mans heart to see a poore sheepe in a Lions mouth, whilest hee teareth him, rendeth him, and puls out his guts? Even such is the case of ignorant men in the clawes of the Divell. For the Divell hath them under him, rideth them at his pleasure, and teareth their soules in pieces.

Oh that wee had eyes to see these things, hearts to feele them, and affections to bee throughly moved with them, even unto mourning and teares!

Phil. Few doe thinke that ignorant men are in so wofull a case as you speak of; for they thinke ignorance will excuse them. And some will say, they are glad they have so little knowledge. For if they should have much knowledge

ledge of their masters will, and do it not, they should be beaten with many stripes; but now, being ignorant, they thinke all is safe.

Theol. God willed his people to offer sacrifice for their sinnes of ignorance, therefore ignorance is a sin, and excuseth no man. And as for the state of their soules before God, it is most miserable, if wee could see into their soules as wee see their bodies. For assuredly there bee multitudes which ruffle it out in velvets and silkes, and most brave and glittering outsides, but inwardly are full of filthinesse and sin: they have fine delicate bodies, but most ougly, blacke, and filthy soules; if a man could see into their soules as he doth into their bodies, hee would stop his nose at the stinke of them. For they smell ranke of sin in the nostrils of God, his Angels, and all good men.

Phil. Then I perceive by your speech that the case of all ignorant and profane men is fearfull in the sight of God, and that all good men are to pity them and to pray for them.

Theol. If two blind and deafe men should walk in a beate path that leads to a great deep pond, wherein they are like to bee drowned if they goe forwards, and two men farre off should whoope unto them, and will them not

to

to goe forward lest they be drowned, yet they neither seeing any man, nor hearing any man, goe forward, and are drowned: were not this a lamentable spectacle to behold? Even so is it with all the ignorant, blind, and deafe fooles of the world, for they call no perils, but walke on boldly to destruction. And though the Preachers of the Gospel whoop never so loud unto them, or gibe them never so many warnings and caveats to take heed; yet they being inwardly blind, see nothing, & spiritually deaf, hear nothing, and therefore go on forward in their sins and ignorance, till they suddenly fall into hell pit.

Put case also two great Armies should pitch a field, and fight a maine battell upon a Plaine, and that some man should stand upon the top of a mountaine hard by, and behold all, and should see with his owne eyes how thousands, and ten thousands, went to wracke, and fell downe on every side as thicke as haile the whole Plaine swimming in blood: and should also heare the groaning of souldiers wounded, and the dolefull sighs and groanings of many Captaines & Colonels giving up the ghost: were not this a most wofull spectacle? Even so, when wee doe cleerely see Satan wound and murder thousand

thousand

thousand soules; is it not a farre more tragicall and lamentable sight? and ought it not even to kill our hearts to behold it? but (alas) men have no eyes to see into these things. And yet certaine it is that Sathan doth continually, and in most fearfull manner, massacre innumerable soules. Thus have I shewed you the woefull estate of prophane and ignorant men.

Phil. If it bee so, you that bee Ministers and Preachers of the Gospel, and have taken upon you the cure and charge of soules, have need to looke about you, and doe what in you lieth to save soules; and, as good shepeards, in great pitie and compassion, to labour to pull them out of the pawes of this roaring Lion, which goes about continually seeking whom he may devoure.

Theol. It standeth us upon indeed very seriously and carefully to looke to it, as wee will answer it at the dreadfull day of judgement. For it is no small matter that we have taken in hand, which is, to care for the flock which Christ hath bought with his blood. I would to God therefore that wee would leave striving about other matters, and strive together all about this, who can pull most out of the kingdome of Sathan, sinne, and ignorance; who can win

win most soules; and who can performe best service to the Church. This were a good strife indeed; and would to God that wee might once at last with joyned forces goe about it, and with one heart and hand joyne together to build up Gods house. If through our owne follies the worke hath beene hindered, or any breach made, let us in wisdome and love labour to make it up againe: if there have beene any declining and coldnesse; let us now at last revive, let us stirre up our selves, that wee may stir up others; let us be zealous and fervent in spirit, that we may through Gods grace put life into others, and rouze up this dead, declining, and cold age wherein we live. So shall God bee glorified, his Church edified, his Saints comforted, his people saved, his throne erected, and the kingdome of the Divell overthrowne.

Phil. What thinke you were the best course to effect this which you speake of?

Theol. This is a thing that must bee exceedingly laboured in of us which are the Ministers and Preachers of the Gospel. And here is required diligence, and (as wee say) double diligence: for the people are every where very ignorant. Some are stones, altogether uncapable of in-

instructions: others are froward and wilfull: some will receive the doctrine, but not the practice: some againe are altogether set upon perverſneſſe and cavilling. So that a man were better take upon him the charge of keeping wolves and Beares, than the charge of ſoules. For it is the hardeſt thing in the world to reforme mens diſorders, and to bring them into order; to pull mens ſoules out of the Kingdome of Satan, and to bring them to God. It is, as wee ſay, an endleſſe piece of worke, and infinite toyle, a labour of all labours: I quake to thinke of it. For men are ſo obſtinate and irrefragable, that they will bee brought into no order: they will come under no yoke. They will not bee ruled by God, nor bridled by his word. They will follow their owne ſwinge. They will runne after their owne luſts and pleaſures. They will rage and ſtorme if you goe about to curb them and reſtraine them of their wils, libings, and liberties. They will have their wils, likings and liberties. They will have their wils, and follow their old faſhions, ſay what you will, and doe what you can.

Is it not, thinke you, a buſie piece of worke to ſmooth and ſquare ſuch Timber-logs, ſo full of knots and knobs?

knowe? Is it not a tedious and irkesome thing to thinke upon? And would it not kill a mans heart to goe about it? For how hard a thing is it to bring such into frame, as are so far out of frame?

Phil. Well Sir, you can but do your endeavour, and commit the successe to God. You can but plant and water: let God give the increase. You are Ministers of the letter, but not of the Spirit. You baptize with water, but not with the holy Ghost. If you therefore preach diligently, exhort, admonish and reprove publikely and privately, studying by all good example of life, and seeking with all good zeale, care and conscience, to doe the uttermost that in you lyeth, to reduce them from their evill waies; I take it, you are discharged, though they remaine stubborne and incorrigible. For you know what the Lord saith by his Prophet, If you doe admonish them, and give them warning, then you shall be discharged, and their bloud shall be required at their owne hands.

Ezech. 33. 9.

Theol. You have spoken the truth. And therefore, sith some must needs take upon them this so great a charge, it will bee our best course, to labour much with them in Catechising, and private instructions, and that in most familiar and plaine man-

manner. For much good hath béene done, and is done, this way. The ignorant sort must bee much laboured upon this way: and so no doubt, much good may be done. For in all labour there is profit. Herein wee (that are the Ministers of Christ) must be content to be abased, and to teach the poore ignorant people in most plaine manner; vsing them many easie questions and often questioning with them in most plaine and louing manner, till wee haue brought them to some taste and sparke of the principles of Christian Religion. Wee must not be ashamed to vse repetitions and tautologies, and to tell them one thing twenty times ouer, euer ouer againe, heere a line and there a line, here a little and there a little, precept vpon precept, vpon the Prophet speakes. I know right well, nothing goes more against the stomach of a worldling, and him that is not taught indeed, than to bee thus vrged and instructed, and told ouer, as we teach Babes: Some can at no hand endure it. But truely, truely, I find now, after a long experience that if we will doe any good to these simple and ignorant soules, wee must enter into this course: and wee may not bee ashamed of it. For it will bee our crowne and

Pro. 14. 23.

Esay. 28. 10.

and our glory to win soules, howsoeuer wee bee abased. Let us therefore be well content to stoop downe, that Christ may be exalted: let us bee abased, that God may be honoured: let us doe all things in great loue to Christ, who hath said, If thou louest me, feed, feed, feed my flock. Let us therefore testifie our loue to him by feeding his flocke. Let us doe all things in great loue and deepe compassion towards the poore soules that goe astray: as it is said, that our Lord Iesus was moued to pitie, and his bowels did yerne to see the people as sheep without a shepheard. Let it likewise moue us throughly, and make our hearts to bleed, to see so many poore sheep of Christ wandring and straying in the mountaine and wildernesse of this world, caught in euery bramble, and hanged in euery bush, ready to be deuoured of the wolfe. Thus haue I shewed you what course (in my iudgement) is best to bee taken for the deliuering of poore ignorant soules out of the captiuity of Sathan and sinne.

Iohn 21.15.

Phil. Now as you haue declared what course is best to bee followed on your part which are Ministers and Preachers of the Gospel, so I pray you shew what is best to be done of us which are the people of God.

Theol.

Theol. The best counsell that I can give you, if it were for my life, is, to be much exercised in the Word of God, both in hearing, reading, and meditation thereof, and also to purchase unto your selfe the sincere Ministery of the Gospel, and to make conscience to live under it; esteeming your selfe happy if you have it, though you want other things; and unhappy if you have it not, though you have all other things. For it is a peerelesse pearle, an incomparable jewell. For the purchasing whereof wee are advised by our Lord Jesus to sell all that we have, rather than to go without it. Againe, our Saviour Christ gives the same counsell to the Church of Laodicea, in these words, I counsell thee to buy of me gold tried by the fire, that thou maist be rich, and white raiment, that thou maist be cloathed, and that thy filthy nakednesse doe not appeare; and annoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou maist see. Where you see the Word of God is compared to most precious gold, whereby wee are made spiritually rich; and to glittering attire, wherewith our naked soules are cloathed; and to an eye-salve, wherewith our spirituall blindnesse is cured. We are advertised also by Jesus Christ, whose counsell is ever the best, to buy these things, whatsoever

Mat. 13. 44.

Apoc. 3. 18.

soever they call us. The same counsel
Pro. 23. 23. also giveth wise Solomon saying, Buy
the truth, but sell it not. So then you
see the counsell which herein I give
you is not of mine owne, but the
counsell of Jesus himselfe, and Solo-
mon the wise: & who can, or who dare
except against their counsell?

Asun. Is your meaning that men must
of necessity frequent preaching of the
word? will not bare reading serve the
turne?

Theol. I told you before that rea-
ding is good, profitable, and necessa-
ry: but yet it is not sufficient. We
must not content our selves with that
onely, but wee must goe further, and
get unto our selves the sound preach-
ing of the Gospel, as the chiefest and
most principall meanes which God
hath ordained and sanctified for the
saving of men. As Saint Paul saith,
1 Cor. 1. 21. when as the world (by wisedome) knew
not God, in the wisedome of God it
pleased God, by the foolishnesse of
preaching, to save them that beleeve.
The meaning of it is, that when as
men, neither by naturall wisedome,
nor the contemplation of the crea-
tures, could sufficiently attaine to the
true knowledge of God; the Lord
according to his heavenly & infinite
wisedome thought of another course,
which is, to save men by preaching:
which

which the world counteth foolishnesse. And by the way note, that the preaching of the word is not a thing of humane invention, but it is Gods own device, & came first from him, and is the next & neerest way to save mens soules.

Wise Solomon also in the Booke of the Proverbs telleth us, that the preaching of Gods word (which hee calleth Vision, using the word of the Prophets, which called their Sermons Visions) is not a thing that may be spared, or that we may be at our choice whether we have it or no: but he maketh it to bee of absolute necessity unto eternall life. For he saith, Where Vision faileth, the people are left naked. So indeed it is in the Originall: but the old Translation giveth us the sense thus, Where the Word of God is not preached, there the people perish. Thus you see that Solomon striketh it dead, telling us, that all they which are without preaching of the word, are in exceeding great danger of losing their soules. Oh that men could be perswaded of this! S. Paul also saith that faith commeth by hearing the word preached: for he saith, How can they heare without a Preacher? If faith commeth by hearing the word preached, then I reason thus: No preaching, no faith: no faith, no Christ: no Christ, no eter-

Pro. 29. 18.

Rom. 10. 14.

nall life: for eternall life is only in him. Let us then put them together thus: Take away the word, take away faith: take away faith, take away Christ: take away Christ, & take away eternall life. So then it followes: Take away the word, and take away eternall life.

Or we may reade them backward thus: If we will have heaven, wee must have Christ: If wee will have Christ, we must have faith: If wee will have faith, wee must have the word preached. Then it followeth thus: If we will have heaven, wee must have the word preached. Then I conclude, that preaching generally, and for the most part, is of absolute necessity unto eternall life, as meat is of absolute necessity for the preservation of our bodies, as graile and fodder are of absolute necessity for the upholding of the life of beasts, and water of absolute necessity for the life of fishes. Then this being so, men are with great care and conscience to hear the Gospel preached, to frequent Sermons, to resort much to Gods house and habitation, where his honour dwelleth: with David to say, One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I require, even that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the dayes of my life, to behold the beautie of the Lord and to visit his holy Temple.

Psal. 27. 4.

With

with godly Mary to say, One thing is necessary, and so chuse the better part. Luk. 14. 42.

with the poore Cripple at Bethesda, to wait for the moving of the waters by the Angel, that his impotencie may be cured: I meane, that wee should tye our selves to the first moving of the spirituall waters of life by the preachers of the Gospel, that our spirituall impotencie may be holpen and relieved. For the ministry of the Gospel is that golden pipe whereby and where-through all the Goodnesse of God, all the sweetnes of Christ, and all heavenly graces whatsoever, are derived unto us, which thing was shadowed in the Law by the Pomegranates in the skirts of Aarons garments, and the golden Bels betweene them round about, that is, a golden Bell and a Pomegranat, a golden Bell and a Pomegranate. The golden Bells did signifie the preaching of the Gospel, and the Pomegranates, the sweet savour of Christs death. Noting thereby, that the sweet savour of Christs death, and all the benefit of his passion, should bee spred abroad by the preaching of the Gospel. Thus you see, that if ever men purpose to be saved, they must make more account of the preaching of the Gospel then they have done, and not thinke (as most John 5. 7. Exod. 8. 33.

men doe) that they may be without it, and yet doe well enough: and some had as leeve be without it as have it: for it doth but disquiet them, and trouble their consciences: but woe be unto such.

Phil. Yet wee see where the Word is soundly preached, there be many bad people: and the reasons thereof, in mine opinion, are two: The one, that God taketh his holy spirit from many in hearing the Word, so that their hearing is made unfruitfull: The other, that the Divell hath an hundred devices to hinder the effectuall working of the Word, so as it shall doe no good at all, nor take any effect in multitudes of men. But you, Master *Theologus*, can better lay open this matter then I, I pray you therfore speak something of it.

Theol. The sleights of Sathan in this behalfe are more, and more slie, then I or any man else can possibly discover. For who is able to descrie, or in sufficient manner to lay open the deepe subtilties, and most secret and sinfull suggestions of the Divell in the hearts of men? He is so cunning a crafts-master this way, that none can perfectly trace him. His workings in the hearts of men are with such close and hidden deceits, and most methodicall and crafty conveyances, that none can sufficiently find them out. But yet notwithstanding, I will

will bewray unto you so much as I know or can conceive of his dealings with them that heare the word, that he may steale it out of their hearts, and make it fruitlesse and unprofitable. First of all he bestirreth him, and laboureth hard to keep men fast asleep in their sins, that they may have no care at all of their owne salvation, and therefore dissuadeth them from hearing or reading the word at all, lest they should be awaked. If this will not prevaile, but that they must needs heare, then his craft is to make their hearing unprofitable, by sleepinesse, dulnesse, by-thoughts, conceitednesse, and a thousand such like. If this will not serve the turne, but that the word doth get within them, and worke upon them (so as thereby they grow to some knowledge and understanding of the truth) then he practiseth another way, which is, to make them rest themselves upon their bare knowledge, and so become altogether conscienceless. If this will not suffice, but that men fall to doing, and leave some sins, especially the grosse sins of the world, and doe some good, then he perswadeth them to trust to those doings without Christ, and to thinke themselves well enough, because they doe some good, and leave some evill. If this bee not enough,

but that men attaine unto the true justifying faith which apprehendeth Christ, and resteth upon his merits, then her deviseth how to blemish the beautie of their faith, and weaken their comfort through many frailties and wants; yea, grosse downfalls and ranke evils; so as they shall bee but spotted and leprous Christians. If this weapon will not worke, but that Christians doe joyne all good vertues with their faith, and abound-antly shine forth in all the fruits of righteousnesse, then he casteth about another way, which is, to daunt and damp them with discouragements, as poverty, necessity, sicknesse, reproaches, contempt, persecutions, &c. If none of all these will doe the deed, but that men constantly beleeve in Christ, and patiently and joyfully endure all afflictions, then his last refuge is, to blow them up with gun-powder; that is, to puffe them up with a pride of their gifts, graces, and strength, and so to give them an utter overthrow, whilest they doe not walk humbly, and give God the praise of his gifts.

Thus have you a little taste of Sathans cunning, in making the word unfruitfull amongst us.

Asun. I pray you good Sir (seeing I am ignorant and unlearned) give me some

some particular directions out of the Word of God, for the good guiding and ordering of my particular actions, in such sort as that I may glorifie God in the earth, and after this life be glorified of him for ever.

Theol. It were an infinite thing to enter into all particulars: but briefly doe this; First, seeke God earnestly in his word, pray much, in all things give thanks: eschew evill, and doe good: feare God and keepe his commandements: reforme your selfe and your household: cleave unto vertue and vertuous men: keepe company with the godly, and avoid the societie of the wicked. Live soberly, justly, and holily in this present evill world. Speake always gracelously, and beware of filthy communication. Recompence no man evill for evill, but recompence evill with good. Bee courteous and pitifull towards all men. Take heed of forswearing, cursing, and banning. Beware of anger, wrath, and bitternesse. Reprove your friend openly, reprove him secretly. Speake no evill of them that are absent, nor of the dead. Speake evill of no man: speake alwaies the best, or at least, not the worst. Reverence Gods Name, and keepe his Sabbaths. Avoid all the figures of condemnation, and labour

after all the signes of salvation. Above all things take heed of sin, for that is the very cut-throat of the soule, and of all goodnesse. Tremble therefore, and sin not: for if you sin, marke what followeth:

Six great dangers in sinne.
- God seeth.
- His Angels beare witnesse.
- The Conscience pricketh.
- Death threatneth.
- The Divell accuseth.
- Hell devoureth.

You see then that sin is no scarre-crow nor jesting matter. Every sin that a man committeth is as a thorne thrust deepe into the soule, which will not be got out againe, but with many a sigh, and many a sorowfull, Oh, oh. Every sin is written with a pen of iron, and the point of a Diamond, upon the conscience, and shall in the last day (when the booke shall be opened) accuse us, and give in evidence against us. If a man commit sin with pleasure, the pleasure passeth away, but the conscience and sting of the sin abideth, and tormenteth deadly: but if a man doe well, though with labour and painfulnesse, the paine passeth away, yet the conscience of well-doing remaineth with much comfort. But the best end of sinne is alwayes repentance, if not in this life, then with woe

Jer. 17. 1.

Note this.

and

and alas when it is too late. Therefore take heed in time; take heed, I say, of sin: for

Six most hurtfull effects of sinne.
- Sinne hardens the heart, Heb 3.13.
- Sin gnawes the conscience, 1 Sam. 25.
- Sin fights against the soule, 1 Pet. 1.11.
- Sinne brings forth death, James 1.15.
- Sinne makes ashamed, Rom 6.21.
- Sin procures plagues of body and soule, Deut. 28.

Behold therefore the evill effects of sin. For this cause Zophar the Naamathite speakes very wisely to Job, saying, When thou shalt lift thy face out of thy sin, thou shalt be strong, and shalt not feare: thou shalt forget all sorrow, thou shalt remember it as the waters that are past. Where Zophar plainely sheweth, that the avoyding of sin is our strength, and the committing of it, our weakening: according to that of Solomon, The way of the Lord is the strength of the upright man. Therefore walke in the way of God, and take heed of the wayes of sinne: for God puntsheth every sin his way, some one way, and some another; and no sin can escape unpunished. For because God is just, there-

Job 11.

Pro. 20. 29.

fore hee must needs punish sin in all men, though in divers maners; as the wicked in their owne persons, the godly in Christ. Beware of it therefore, and flatter not your selfe in your sins. Remember how every disobedience & every transgression hath had a just recompence of reward. God hath in all ages matched the cause with the effect, that is, sin with the punishment of sin. The Israelits, for breaking the first Commandement, in making other gods, were often smitten by the hand of God. Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, for the breach of the second Commandement, in offering strange fire upon Gods Altar, were consumed with fire. Yee that blasphemed, and transgressed the third Commandement, was stoned to death. He that brake the fourth Commandement, in gathering sticks on the Sabbath, was likewise stoned. Absalom transgressing the fift, was hanged in his owne hair. Caine transgressing the first, in slaying his brother Abel, was branded with the marke of Gods wrath. Sichem the son of Hamor, transgressing the seventh, in defiling Dinah the daughter of Jacob, was slaine by Simeon & Levi the sons of Jacob. Achan sinning against the eighth Commandement, in stealing the wedge of gold, and the Babylo-

nish

Note how God in all ages hath punished the breakers of his Law. Exod. 32. 10.

Lev. 10. 2.

Numb. 15.

Num. 15. 32.

2. Sam. 18.

Gen. 4. 15.

Gen. 34. 26.

Jos. 7. 25.

nish garment, was stoned to death. Ananias and Sapphira sinning against the ninth, in lying and dissembling, were suddenly smitten with death. Ahab transgressing the tenth Commandement, in coveting and discontentment, was devoured of dogs. Or if you will have originall sinne therein onely forbidden, then infants are therefore punished with death, Rom 5.14. Acts 5.8. 1 Kin. 21.24.

Thus wee see there is no dallying with God; but if wee sinne, wee are as sure to be jerkt for it as the coat is on our backe. Therefore let us not deceive our selves, nor make light of sin: for sinne is no scarring, and we shall one day find it so. And howsoever wee make light of some sins, yet in very deed all sinne is odious in the sight of God: yea, all sin is hainous and capitall in this respect, that it is against a person of infinite being, it is against God himselfe, it is against the highest Majestie. For the greatnesse of the person offended doeth inhaunse and increase the greatnesse of the sinne.

As for example: If a man raile at a Justice of Peace, he shall be stocked: if he rail at one of his Majesties privy Councell, he shall be imprisoned: but if he raile at his owne Majestie, hee shall

shall be hanged. See then you see how a sin is increased by the dignity of the person offended. Now then, sith all mortall Princes are but dust in the sight of God (and he is a person of infinite and incomparable Majestie) how hainous and how flagitious a thing is it, in any wise, or after any sort, to sin against his most royall and sacred person? Well then, to grow to some conclusion, this I doe advise you; as to shunnall vice, so to embrace all vertue; as to put off the old man, so to put on the new man. Remember often and alwaies what shall become of you after this life, where you shall bee forty yeeres hence, in Hell, or in Heaven. Look well to that in time; and therefore so live that you may live alwaies. Consider often in your serious cogitation:

Nine profitable considerations.
- What you have beene.
- What you are.
- What you shall be.
- What God hath done for you.
- What he doth.
- What he will doe.
- Gods judgements past.
- Gods judgements present.
- Gods judgements to come.

Awake at last, and take care for your salvation. Sleepe no longer in sin,

lest

lest yee perish eternally. For verily there is a reward for the righteous: doubtlesse there is a God that judges the earth. And this is the best counsell I can give you.

Psal. 58. 11.

Sim. Your counsell is very good. I pray God give mee grace to follow it, and so to live, that I may please God, and goe to heaven in the end.

Theol. You must take heed you speake not these words of course and for fashion sake, having no settled purpose in your heart to follow these directions. For there be multitudes that can skill to give good words, but they will doe nothing. They thinke they highly please God with their good words, and that God will take them for payment; as though God regarded words. They would faine goe to heaven, but they will take no paines, they will leave no sins, they will not forgoe their lusts and pleasures. They would have the reward of Gods children, but they will not doe the workes of Gods children. They would have the sweet, but they will none of the sowre. They would have the Crowne, but they will fight never a stroke. They would faine come to Canaan, but they are loth to travell that long and dangerous way which leadeth unto it. Therefore those men being

This is most mens case.

being the sons of idleness. Will they shoot (in the end) of that they looke for. For the Spirit saith, The sluggard lusts, but his soule hath nought. Prov. 13. 4.

we must therefore leave bare words, and come to deeds. For our Lord Jesus saith, Not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdome of heaven: but hee that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven: Mat. 7. 21.

where we see Christ (in plaine termes) excludes out of his kingdome all those whose religion consisteth only in good words and smooth speeches, but make no conscience to practise the commandements of God.

David, having made some good preparation for the building of the Temple, and perceiving his son Solomon to have little provision enough to perfect and finish it, doth most wisely encourage him to the worke, in these words: Up and be doing, and the Lord shall be with thee. 1 Chr. 22. 16. Oh that men would follow this counsell of David, that they would up, and bee doing, and not sit still and doe nothing; that they would leave words and countenances, and set upon the practice of Gods Law, and study with all care and conscience to be obedient to his will. Then assuredly God would be with them, and bless them, and

much

much good would come of it. For the Scripture saith, In all labour there is profit or increase: but the talke of the lips onely bringeth want.

Prov. 14. 23.

Phil. Most mens minds are so wholly drowned in the love of this world, that they have no heart to obey God, nor any delight in his commandements.

Theol. The greatest part of men are like to the Gadarens, which esteemed their Swine more than Christ. As we see in these our daies, how many make more account of their kine and sheepe, than of the most glorious Gospel of Christ. They highly esteeme dung, and contemne pearle. They are carefull for trifles, and regard not the things of greatest moment; and therefore may very fitly be compared to a man, who having his wife and children very sick doth utterly neglect them, and is altogether carefull for the curing of his hogs eares.

Phil. Wee are somewhat digressed from the matter wee had in hand. I pray you therefore, if you have any more matter of good counsell to give to *Asineus*, that you would presently deliver it.

Theol. I have little more to say, save onely I would advise him often to remember, and much to muse on these things:

The

Nine things much to be thought of.

The evill he hath committed.
The good he hath omitted.
The time he hath misspent.
The shortnesse of this life.
The vanitie of this world.
The excellencie of the world to come.
Death, then the which nothing is more terrible.
The day of judgement, then the which nothing is more fearefull.
Hell fire, then the which nothing is more intolerable.

Phil. This is short and sweet indeed. You have touched some of these points before, in this our conference. But I am very desirous to heare somewhat more of the two last, which yet have not beene spoken of.

Theol. Sith you are desirous, I will briefly deliver unto you that which I have received from the Lord. First, concerning the day of judgement. I find in the volume of Gods booke, that it shall bee very terrible and dreadfull. For the Son of man shall come in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. Mat. 24. 30.

S. Peter saith, The day of the Lord shall come as a theefe in the night, in the which the heavens shall passe away with a noise, the elements shall melt with heat, and the earth, with the workes that are therein, shall bee burnt 2 Pet. 3. 10.

up.

up. The Apostle tels us; that at Christs comming the whole world shall bee of a light fire; and that all castles, towers, goodly buildings, gold, silver, velvets, silke, and all the glittering hue, glory, and beauty of this world, shall be consumed to powder and ashes. For hee saith plainly, The heavens and the earth, which are now, are reserved to fire against the day of judgement, and of the destruction of ungodly men. Moreover, he strongly proves, that as the world was once destroyed by water, so the second time, in the end thereof, it shall bee destroyed with fire. The Apostle Paul witnesseth the same things, for he saith, Christ shall come from heaven, with all his mighty Angels in flaming fire. And in another place he notes the terrour of his comming to judgement, saying, He shall come with a shout, with the voice of the Archangell, and the trumpet of God. We see by experience, that the comming of mortall Princes to any place is with great pomp and glory. They have great traines and troupes behind them and before them. They are accompanied with many Nobles, goodly Lords, and gallant Ladies doe attend upon them. The Sword-bearer, Trumpetters, and Harbengers goe before: many flaunting and stately

2 Pet. 3. 7.

2 Thes. 1. 1.

1 Thes. 4. 16.

stately Personages follow after. Now then, if the comming of mortall Princes be so pompous & glorious: how much more glorious shall the comming of the Sonne of man bee, in whose sight all mortall Princes are but dust? The Scriptures doe affirme, that his second comming unto judgement shall be with such resplendent and unspeakeable glory, that even the most excellent creatures shall blush at it. For the Sunne shall Matth. 24. 29 be darkned: the Moone shall not give her light: and the Starres shall fall from heaven: meaning thereby, that the most glorious and bright-shining Creatures shall bee clouded and obscured by the inconceivable brightnesse of Christs comming.

Moreover, The terror of Christs comming is noted unto us in this, that immediately before it, the very Sea shall quake and tremble, and in his kinde cry out. For it is said, that the Sea shall roare (and make a noise in most dolefull and lugubrious manner) and men's hearts shall faile them for feare, and for looking after those things which shall come on the world: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. O what shall become of swearers, drunkards, whoremongers, and such like in that day! They shall seeke to creepe into an angers Luk. 21. 25. hole

hole to hide their heads. They shall then cry, woe and alas that ever they were borne. They shall wish that they had never beene borne, or that their mothers had borne them toads. And, as it is said in the Apocalyps, They shall say to the mountaines and rockes, Fall on us, and hide us from the presence of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lambe, For the great day of his wrath is come, and who can stand?

We see therefore that the comming of Christ shall not be base and contemptible, as in his first nitration, but it shall be most terrible, princely, and glorious. And as the Scriptures doe affirme that his comming shall be with great terrour and dread: so also they doe shew that it shall be very sudden and unlooked for. For the day of the Lord shall come as a theefe in the night; as the travell that commeth upon a woman. As a snare it shall come on all them that dwell on the face of the earth. That is, it shall suddenly catch and intangle all men, whersoever they bee in the world. As the earth-quake, which was neere thirty yeeres agone, did suddenly take the world tardy, they not thinking of any such matter: So shall the comming of the Son of man to judgement take the world tardy, and unprepared:

2 Pet. 3. 10.

1 Thes. 5. 2. Luk. 21. 35.

For

for few there bee that thinke of any such matter. Sith therefore the second appearing of Christ shall bee with such suddennesse, let us feare and tremble: for all sudden things are to be feared.

Phil. Well Sir, as you have shewed us the terrour and suddennesse of Christs comming, so shew us the purpose and end of his comming.

Theol. The principall end of his comming shall be to keepe a generall audit, to call all men to an accoant, to have a reckoning of every mans particular actions, and to reward them according to their deeds: as it is written, The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his Angels, and then shall he give to every man according to his deeds. Againe, the Apostle saith to the Corinthians, We must all appeare before the judgement seat of Christ, that every man may receive the things which are done in his body, according to that which hee hath done, whether it be good or evill.

Mat. 26. 27.

1 Cor. 5. 10.

Here wee doe plainely see, that the end of Christs comming shall bee to judge every man according to his workes, that is, as his workes shall declare him, and testifie of him, and of his faith. In another place the Apostle saith, that the end of his comming shall be to render vengeance unto

2 Thes. 1. 9.

to them which know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting perdition from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. Woe then unto two sorts of men, the ignorant, and the disobedient: for the Apostle saith flatly, they both shall be damned. Me thinkes both the ignorant and disobedient, and all other prophanemen, should tremble to thinke of this, that Christ shall come to render vengeance unto them. If wee did certainely know that a forreign enemy should invade our Nation, ouer-run it, and make a conquest of it, that he should shed our bloud, destroy us, and make a massacre amongst us; yea, that wee should see our wiues, our children, our kindred and deare friends slaine before our faces, so as their bloud should streame in the streets, what a wonderfull feare and terrour would it strike into us? wee would quake to thinke of it. Shall wee not then be much more affraid of the damnation of our soules? shall wee not quake to thinke that Christ shall come to take vengeance? If the Lion roare, all the beasts of the field tremble: and shall not wee bee affraid of the roaring of the Lion of the tribe of Judah? But alas, we are so hard-hearted

hearted, and so rockt asleepe in the cradle of securitie, that nothing can move us, nothing can awake us.

Phil. Now as you have shewed us the terror and end of Christs comming: so also declare the manner of it.

Theol. The manner of it is this: that the whole world shall bee cited to appeare personally at the generall Assises, before the great Judge. No man shall be admitted to appear by his Attorney: but all must appear personally. None shall be suffered to put in excuses: but all must come in their owne persons, without bailes or mainprise; as it is written, Wee must all appeare, high and low, rich and poore, king and begger, one and another: as it is plainly set downe in the 20. chapter of the Revelation, where the holy ghost saith, I saw the dead both great and small stand before God: and the sea gave up the dead which were in her, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them. So then it is cleere, that all, without exception, shall make their appearance at the great and dreadfull Assises. O what a great day will that be, when as the whole world shall appeare together at once! If a king marry his sonne, and bid other kings, Emperours, Dukes, and Nobles to the marriage, with all their pomp and traine,

swee

wee use to say, O what a marriage, what a meeting, what adoe, what a great day will there be? but when the universall world shall be assembled together, not only all Monarkes, Kings and Princes, but all other, that ever have beene from the beginning of the world, all that are, and shall bee, what a day will that be? No marvell therefore, though the Scriptures call it the day of God, and the great day of the Lord. Now then when all flesh is come together, to make their personall appearance, then shall the Sonne of God descend unto this tribunall seat, with great majesty and glory. For a fiery streame shall issue and come forth before him: thousand thousand Angels shall accompanie him, and ministers unto him: and ten thousand thousand shall stand before him: the judgement shall bee set, and the bookes opened. All the Saints also and true worshippers of God shall attend him, and accompany him unto his judgement seat. And not onely so, but they shall sit upon the Bench and Throne with him: as it is written, 1 Cor. 6. 2. The Saints shall judge the world: they shall judge the Angels: that is, the Divels, the Angels of darknesse. Our Lord Jesus himselfe did avouch the same thing, when hee

Mat. 19. 28. he said to his Disciples, and in them to all true Christians; Verily I say unto you, that when the Son of man shall sit in the Throne of his Majestie; yee which followed me in the regeneration, shall sit upon twelve thrones, and judge the twelve tribes of Israel. That is, the Saints of God shall beare witnesse that the judgement of Christ, and sentence of condemnation which he passeth against all unbeleevers, is according to justice and equitie. Thus then wee see how Christ shall be accompanied to his Throne, and with what glory and majesty he shall ascend unto it. Experience teacheth, that when mortall Judges hold their Sessions and generall Assises; they are brought unto the Bench and judgement seat with pomp and terrour. For the Sheriffe of the Shire, and Halberd-men, with many Justices of Peace, and traines of others, doe accompany them unto the Bench. Then with how much more glory and majesty shall the Son of God be brought unto his royall Throne? Thus then Christ being set upon his judgement seat, all the ungodly shall bee conveyed before him, and he shall stand over them with a naked sword in his hand; The Devell shall stand by them on the one side to accuse them, and their owne consciences on the other side, and

hee

the gaping gulfe of hell underneath them, ready to devoure them. Then shall the bookes be opened, not any bookes of paper and parchment, but the bookes of mens consciences: For every mans sins are written and recorded in his conscience, as it were in a Register book. Then will God bring every worke to judgment, with every secret thought, and set them in order before all the Reprobates. Then will God lighten the things that are hid in darknes: and make the counsels of the heart manifest. Then shall all the ungodly be arraigned, convicted, and hold up their hands at the barre of Christs tribunall seat, & shall cry guilty. Then shall that most dreadfull sentence of death & condemnation bee pronounced against them by the most righteous Judge, Goe yee cursed into everlasting fire, which is prepared for the Divell & his Angels. Oh doefull sentence! Oh heavie hearing! whose heart doth not tremble at these things? whose haire doth not stand up on their head? For then shall thousands, which in this world have flourished as the Cedars of Libanus, be cast down for evermore, and shall drink (as a just recompence for their iniquity) of the bitter cup of Gods eternall wrath and indignation in the kingdome of darknesse, and in the fearefull presence of Satan,

1 Cor. 4. 5.

Mat. 25. 41.

and all the curſed enemies of Gods grace.

Phil. Well, now as you have declared unto us the terror, the ſuddenneſſe, the end, and the manner of Chriſts comming to judgment, ſo laſtly, ſhew us the right uſe of all theſe things.

Theol. S. Peter telleth and teacheth us the right uſe of all: for, ſaith he, Seeing all theſe things muſt be diſſolved, what manner of perſons ought wee to bee, in holy converſation and godlineſſe? As if hee ſhould ſay: Seth the heavens ſhall paſſe away with a noiſe, the elements ſhall melt with heat, and the earth, with the workes that are therein, ſhall be burnt up: ſith alſo the comming of Chriſt ſhall be with great terror, to a fearefull end, and in a fearefull manner; O how ought wee to excell in goodneſſe? So then S. Peter telleth us, that the true uſe of all is this: that hereby we be brought neerer unto God, even to be more obedient to his will, and to walke in all his commandements, making conſcience of all our waies, and ſtudying to pleaſe God in all things, and to be fruitfull in all good workes, living ſoberly, juſtly and holily in this preſent evill world, and ſhewing forth the vertues of him which hath called us out of darkneſſe to this marvellous light: that ſo wee may

2. Pet. 3. 11.

may be prepared against the day of his appearing, that it may not take us tardy. For our life ought to bee a continuall meditation of death: wee should alwaies live as if wee should die, or that our bed should bee our grave: wee must live continually as if Christ should come to judgement presently: as it is reported of a godly man in the Primitive Church, that whether hee ate or drunke, or whatsoever hee did, he thought alwayes hee heard the trumpet of the Lord, with these words: Arise yee dead, and come unto Judgement. But case it were certainely knowne, that Christ would come to judgement the next Midsummer day; O what an alteration would it make in the world! how would men change their minds and affections? who would care for this world? who would set his heart upon riches? who would regard brave apparell? who durst deceive or oppresse? who durst bee drunke? who durst sweare, lye, and commit adultery? nay, would not all men give up themselves to the obedience of God? would not all serve him diligently? would not all men and women flocke to Sermons? would they not give themselves to prayer & reading? would they not repent them of their sins? would they not cry for

mercy and forgiveneſſe? See then what the knowledge of a certaine day approaching would effect. And ought wee not to doe all theſe things with as great care and zeale, ſeeing the day is uncertaine? For who knoweth whether Chriſt will come this moneth or the next, this yeere or the next? Mat.24.44. Hee himſelfe ſaith, Bee ready, watch, for in the houre that yee thinke not of, will the ſonne of man come. Wee thinke hee will not come this yeere, nor next yeere, nor this hundred yeeres. It may be therefore that he will come ſuddenly upon us, we know not how ſoone: For in an houre that wee little thinke of will hee come. Therefore our Saviour ſaith in the 13. Chapter of Mark, verſe 33. Take heed, watch and pray: for you know not when the time is. And in the Goſpel of S. Luke, hee Luk.21.34. ſaith, Take heed that your hearts bee nor overcome with ſurfetting and drunkenneſſe and the cares of this life; and ſo that day come upon you unawares. For as a ſnare ſhall it come upon all them that dwell upon the face of the earth. Wee heare therefore how many watch-words and caveats our Saviour giveth us, when hee ſaith, Be in a readineſſe, awake, take heed, watch and pray, and looke about you, leſt that day come ſuddenly upon

upon you, and take you napping. It standeth us all therefore upon to be at an houres warning, upon paine of death, and as we will answer it at our uttermost perill.

Phil. Proceed to speake of the torments of hell.

Theol. Concerning the torments of hell I doe note three things, which I will briefly speake of, and they be these: The extremitie, perpetuitie, and remedilesnesse thereof. First, touching the extremitie thereof: it standeth specially in these three things: First, that it is a separation from all joy and comfort of the presence of God. Secondly, that it is an eternall fellowship with the Divell and his Angels. Thirdly, it is a feeling of the horrible wrath of God, which shall seize upon body and soule, and shall feed on them (as fire doth upon pitch and brimstone) for ever. The Scriptures doe note the extremity of it, in calling it, A lake that burnes with fire and brimstone for ever: in saying, There shall bee weeping and gnashing of teeth: in affirming, that their worme dieth not (meaning the worme that gnaweth their conscience, or the torment of conscience) and the fire never goeth out: in terming it, Tophet, which is deep and large, and the burning thereof is fire and much

Apoc. 11. 8.

Luke 13. 21.

Marke 1. 44

wood: and that the breath of the Lord, as a river of brimstone, doth kindle it. All these things be terrible to our senses: and yet can they not fully expresse the thing as it is indeed. For no heart can conceive, or tongue expresse the greatnesse and extremitie of the torments of hell. As the joyes of heaven never entred into the heart of man; no more did the torments of hell. All the torments and troubles that fall upon men in this life, are but the sparkles of the furnace of Gods totall wrath. All fires are but as it were pictures of fire, in comparison of hell fire. For as one writeth, hell fire is so extreamely hot; that it will burne up a man seven mile before he come at it. Yet the Reprobates being alwayes in it, shall never be consumed of it. As the Salamander is alwaies in the fire and never consumeth, so the wicked shall be alwaies in the fire of hell, and never consume. For hell is a death alwaies living, and an end alwaies beginning. It is a grievous thing to a man that is very sicke, to lie long upon a feather bed: how much more upon a hot gridiron? but how most of all to burn alwaies in hell fire, and never bee consumed? Another extremity of it consisteth in this, that the torments of hell are universall:

that

that is, in every member at once; head, eyes, tongue, teeth, throat, stomack, back, belly, heart, sides, &c. All punishments of this life are particular: for some are pained in their head, some in their backe, some in their stomache, &c. yet some particular paines are such as a man would not suffer to gaine all the World. But for a man to bee tormented in all parts at once, what sight more lamentable? who could but take pity of a dog in the streat in that case? Thus then we see, that the extremity of hell torments is greater then can be conceived or uttered. For who can utter that which is incomprehensible? how can we go no further in comprehending that which is incomprehensible, then to know it to be incomprehensible.

Phil. As you have shewed us the extremity of hell torments, so now proceed to the perpetuitie.

Theol. The Scriptures doe set forth the perpetuity of hell tormentes, in saying, they are for ever. The wicked shall be cast into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone for ever. The fire never goeth out, when as many hundred thousand yeeres are expired as there be stones by the Sea side, yet still there bee so many more to come. For that which hath no end, can never come to an

end. If all the Arithmeticians in the world were set a worke to doe nothing but number all the dates of their life, even the greatest numbers that they could possibly set downe, and should in the end adde all their numbers together, yet could they never come any thing neere to that length of time wherein the wicked shall be tormented. If the whole circumference of the heavens were written about with figures of Arithmeticke, from the East to the West, and from the West to the East againe; yet could it not containe that infinite time, and innumerable yeeres, wherein all unbeleevers shall suffer eternall torture. For in things infinite, time hath no place. For time is the measure of those things which are subject to measure. Therefore because hell torments are infinite, they cannot be measured by any time: neither can that which is infinite bee diminished. For if you subtract from that which is infinite, ten thousand thousand millions of millions, yet it is thereby nothing diminished or made lesse. Put case a man should once in an hundred thousand yeeres take a spoonfull of water out of the great Ocean sea, how long would it bee ere hee had so emptied it? Yet shall a man sooner empty the sea, by taking

out

out a spoonefull once in an hundred thousand yeeres, then the damned soule shall have any ease. Therefore a certaine writer saith, If a damned soule might bee tormented in hell but a thousand yeeres, and then have ease, there were some comfort in it: (for then there would be hope it would come to an end) but, saith hee, this word *Ever* killeth the heart. O consider this yee that forget God. O yee carnall worldlings thinke on this in time. For if you will not now bee moved in hearing, you shall then bee crushed in peeces in feeling. What availeth it to live in all possible pleasures, and carnall delights here, for some 60. yeeres, and then to suffer this eternall torment? what shall it profit a man to win the whole world, and lose his soule? They be more then mad, which will hazzard their soule for a little profit, and a few stinking pleasures. But this is the manner of men: they will have the present sweet (come of it what will) though they pay never so deare for it: though they goe to the highest price: though they lose their soules for it. Oh the unspeakable blindnesse and madnesse of the men of this world! The divell hath put out their eyes, and therefore leadeth them whither he lists. For who cannot lead

1. Sam. 11. 2. a blind man whither he lists. Nahash the Ammonite would make no covenant with the Israelites, but upon condition that he might put out all their right eyes. So the Divell doth covenant with all the wicked to put out both their eyes; that he may leade them directly into hell.

Phil. Now Sir a word or two more of the remedilesnesse of hell fire.

Theol. The Scriptures doe affirm, that as the torments of hell are extreme, so they are without all hope of remedy: as it is written, Psal. 49. 8. A man can by no meanes redeeme his brother: hee cannot give his ransome unto God: so precious is the redemption of the soule, and the continuance for ever. To this purpose Abraham said to the rich man, Luke 16. 26. being in hell torments, Betwixt you and us there is a great gulfe set, so that they which would goe from hence to you cannot, neither can they come from thence to us. Our Lord Jesus also saith, Mat. 19. What shall a man give for the recompence of his soule? where our Saviour doth plainely affirme, that there is no ransome or recompence, though never so great, to be given for a damned soule. For the soule being in hell, can never be released, it is past remedy, no meanes whatsoever can doe any good: no gold, no silver, no friends, no riches, no power,

no

no policy, no flattery, no bribery, no wrath, no speech or device whatsoever, can prevaile one jot: for a man being once in hell hath no remedy, he is in close prison, he is shut up under the hatches for ever, there is no getting out againe, he must suffer perpetuall imprisonment. Hee cannot bring a writ of false imprisonment, because he is laid in by the most righteous and just Judge, who cannot possibly doe any wrong; but hee must lie by it. For being there once, he is there for ever. If all the Angels of heaven should intreat for a damned soule; if Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob should make great suit; if all the Prophets, Apostles and Martyrs should bee continuall solicitors to Christ for release, if the father should make request for his son, or the mother for the daughter, yet can none of these bee heard, they must all have the repulse. For the sentence of Christ cannot be reversed, his decree is unrepealeable. The due consideration of these things may make all hearts to quake, and all knees to tremble. In the troubles and afflictions of this life, though a man come in never so great danger, yet hee may winde out againe by one meanes or another, by money, or friendship, or rewards, or such like meanes: but in hell-fire, this is it that gripes,

and

and maketh the heart despaire, that there is no remedy at all to be used. If wee should aske of a damned soule, or an afflicted conscience, what they would give for the ease and redemption of their soules, they would answer, the whole world: howsoever secure worldlings and wicked Atheists (which see nothing, or feele nothing) make nothing of it.

Here, by the way, let us consider the greatnesse of the losse of a mans soule; which we shall the better perceive and see into, if we can aright value and prize the soule. If therefore it be demanded, what is the price of the soule, or what is it worth? Our Lord Jesus answereth, that it is more worth than all the world. For, saith he, What shall it profit a man to winne all the world, and lose his soule? Therefore the soule of the poorest beggar is more worth then all the world. Then I reason thus: If the soule be more worth then all the world, then the losse of it is greater then the losse of the whole world. For indeed it is a losse of all losses, an unrecoverable losse. If a man should have his house burnt over his head, and all that hee hath consumed in one night, it were a great losse. If a Merchant-venturer should lose twenty thousand pound in

Mat. 16.

in one venture, in one ship, or (as they say) in one bottome, it were a very great losse. If a King should lose his Crowne and Kingdome, it were an exceeding great losse: But the losse of the soule is a thousand times more then all these, it is a matter of infinite importance. If a Tenant bee cast out of the favour of his Land-lord, it is a matter of griefe. If a Noblemans Secretary bee cast out of favour with his Lord, so that he taketh a pitch against him, it is a matter of great sorrow. If a Nobleman himselfe be discountenanced, and cast out of all favour with his Prince, that was in great favour, it is a corsie, a heart-smart, and a matter of exceeding grievance. But to be eternally separated from God, to be shut out of his favour, and to be cast away from his presence, and the presence of his Angels, is a matter of infinite more dolour and torment. Marke then and behold what a thing it is for a man to lose his soule. Oh therefore that men would be wise in Gods feare, that they would looke out in time, and make provision for their soules. Now then, to close up this whole point: the summe of all that hath beene said is this, That the torments of hell are endlesse, easelesse, and remediesse.

Asun.

Asin. The laying open of these doctrines of hell-fire, and the judgement to come, makes me quake and tremble: I am much thereby perplexed, I feele great terrour in my conscience, I am affraid I shall be damned.

Anth. Damned, man! What speake you of damning? I am ashamed to heare you say so. For it is well knowne that you are an honest man, a quiet liver, a good neighbour, and as good a townesman as any in the Parish where you dwell, and you have beene alwayes so reputed and taken. If you should be damned, I know not who shall be saved?

Asin. I regard not your flatteries. I beleeve God, I beleeve his Word, I beleeve those things which M. *Theologus* hath alledged out of the holy Scriptures, pointing me both to the chapter and the verse: and whether it be more meet that I should beleeve the Scriptures, or your soothings, judge you. No, no: now I doe cleerely see, by the glasse of Gods law, that my state is wretched and miserable. For I have lived in sin and ignorance all the daies of my life, being utterly void of all Religion and true knowledge of God. I am not the man indeed that you and others take mee for. For though outwardly I have lived honestly to the world-ward, yet inwardly I have not

not lived religiously to God-ward.

Antil. Tush, tush: now I see you are in a melancholy humour. If you will goe home with mee I can give you a speedy remedy, for I have many pleasant and merry bookes, which if you should heare them read, would soone remedy you of this melancholy passion. I have the Court of *Venus*, The Palace of Pleasure, *Bevis* of *Southhampton*, *Ellen* of *Rummin*, The merry jest of the Friar and the Boy, The pleasant Story of *Clem* of the *Clough*, *Adam Bell*, and *William* of *Cloudesley*, The odde tale of *William*, *Richard*, and *Humfrey*, The pretty conceit of *John Splinters* last Will and Testament: which all are excellent and singular bookes against heart-qualmes, and to remove such dumpishnesse as I see you are now fallen into.

Asm. Your vaine and frivolous bookes of tales, jests, and lies, would more increase my griefe, and strike the print of sorrow deeper into my heart.

Antil. Nay, if you be of that minde, I have done with you.

Phil. I pray you, if a man may bee so bold with you, how came you by all these good bookes? I should have said, so much trash and rubbish.

Antil. What mattereth it to you? What have you to doe to enquire? But I pray you, Sir, what doe you mean

to

to call them trash and rubbish?

Phil. Because they bee no better. They bee goodly geere, trim stuffe; They are good to kindle a fire, or to scoure a hot oven withall. And shall I tell you my opinion of them? I doe thus thinke, That they were devised by the Divell, seene and allowed by the Pope, printed in hell, bound up by Hobgoblin, and first published and dispersed in Rome, Italie, and Spaine, and all to this end, that thereby men might bee kept from the reading of the Scriptures. For even as a Lapwing with her busie crie draweth men away from her nest, so the Popish generation by these fabulous devices draw men from the Scriptures.

Antil. Ah Sir, I see now a fooles bolt is soon shot. You are more precise then wise. The Vicar of Saint Fooles shall be your ghostly father. What tell you mee of your opinion? I would you should well know, I neither regard you nor your opinion. There be wiser men then you, who both reade, allow, and take pleasure in these bookes.

Theol. Let him alone good Philagathus, for you see what he is, there is no end of his crossing and cavilling. But he that is ignorant, let him be ignorant; and he that is filthy, let him be more filthy. Let us now turne our speech to Asunetus, for I see he is

is heavy-hearted, and troubled in his minde. How doe you Asunetus? how doe you feele your selfe? Me thinkes you are very sad.

Asun. I am the better for you, Sir, I thanke God: I never knew what sinne meant till this day. It hath pleased God now to give mee some sight and feeling thereof. I am greatly distressed in my conscience to thinke what I have beene. The remembrance of my former sinnes doth strike an horror into mee. When I consider how ignorantly and profanely, and how far off from God I have lived all my life, it stings and gripes mee to the heart. I doe now see that which I never saw, and feele that which I never felt. I doe plainely see, that if I had died in that state wherein I have lived all my life, I should certainly have beene condemned, and should have perished for ever in my sin and ignorance.

Theol. I am very glad that God hath opened your eyes, and given you the sight and feeling of your misery: which indeed is the very first step to eternall life. It is a great favour and speciall mercy of God towards you, that he hath so touched your heart: you can never be thankfull enough for it. It is more then if you had a million of gold given you. It is the onely rare privilege of

of Gods elect to have the eyes of their soules opened, that they may see into heavenly and spirituall things. As for the world, it is just with God to leave them in their blindnesse.

Asm. I doe feele the burthen of my sinnes: I am greatly grieved for them. I am weary of them. I am sorry that ever I sinned against God, or that I should be such a wretch, as to incurre his displeasure, and provoke his Majestie against me. But I pray you, good M. *Theologus*, sith you are a spirituall Physician, and I am sick of sin, that you would minister unto me, out of Gods Word, some spirituall physicke and comfort.

Theol. Truly, I must needs think, that the promises of mercy, and forgivenesse of sinne made in the Gospel, doe belong unto you, and that Jesus Christ is yours: that you are truly interessed in him, and have a proper right unto him. For he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. You doe now feele your selfe to be a sinner: you are grieved for your sins: you are weary of them: therefore Jesus Christ is for you: all the benefits of his passion belong to you. Againe he saith, The whole need not the Physician, but they that are sick. But you doe acknowledge your selfe to be sick of sin: therefore

Mat. 9. 12.

Jesus

Jesus Christ will be your Physician: he will swaddle you: he will lay you: he will bind up all your sores: he will heale all your wounds: he will annoint them with the oyle of his mercy: he will smile upon you, and shew you a joyfull countenance: he will say unto you, Your sins are forgiven.

In him you shall have rest and peace to your soule. Through him you shall have ease and comfort. For he takes pity of all such as mourne for their sinnes, as you doe. He biddeth you, and all that are in your case, to come unto him, and he will helpe you. Come unto me, (saith he,) all yee that are weary and heavie loaden, and I will ease you. You are one of them that are bidden to come: for you are weary of your sinnes: you feele the burthen of them: Christ is altogether for such as you are. He regardeth not the world, that is, the prophane and unregenerate men. He bids not them come: he prayeth not for them. I pray not for the world (saith he.) They have no part nor interest in him. They have nothing to doe with him, at least his merits and righteousnesse. He is only for the penitent sinner, and such as mourne for their sinnes. He is a pillow of rest to all ching heads,

Mat. 11. 28.

Joh. 18. 9.

and

and aking consciences. Be of good comfort therefore, feare nothing: for assuredly Christ and all his righteousnesse is yours. He will cloath you with it. Hee will never impute your sins unto you, or lay any of them to your charge: though they be never so many, or so great, he will forget them, and forgive them; as hee saith by the Prophet Esay, Though your sins were as crimson, they shall be made as white as snow: though they were red like scarlet, they shall be as wooll. And againe he saith by the same Prophet, I have put away thy transgressions as thicke as clouds, and thy sinnes as a mist. By another Prophet hee saith, He will lay aside our iniquities, and cast all our sins into the bottome of the sea. Again he saith by the Prophet Esay, I, even I, am he that put away thine iniquities, for my owne sake, and will not remember thy sins. And yet more sweetly he speakes to us by the Prophet Jeremie, saying, Turne againe unto me, and I will not let my wrath fall upon you. For I am merciful, and will not alway keep mine anger. And againe by the Prophet Hosea he saith, I will not execute the fiercenesse of my wrath, I wil not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man. Be of good cheere therefore, comfort your selfe with these promises:

Esay 1. 18.

Esay 44.22.

Micah 7.19.

Esay 43.25.

Jer.3.12.

Hos.11.6.

miſes: you have cauſe to rejoyce, ſeeing God hath wrought in you a diſlike and a griefe for your ſins, which is a certaine token that your ſins ſhall never hurt you: for ſins paſt cannot hurt us, if ſins preſent doe not like us. You are growne to an hatred and diſlike of your ſins, you mourne under the burthen of them, therefore you are bleſſed. For bleſſed are they that mourne. Why therefore ſhould you be ſo heavie and ſad? Remember what S. John ſaith, If any man ſin, we have an Advocate, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, and he is the reconciliation for our ſins. S. Paul ſaith, that Jeſus Chriſt is ſet forth to bee a reconciliation through faith in his bloud. Againe the holy Ghoſt ſaith, Hee is perfectly able to ſave all thoſe that come unto God by him, ſeeing he ever liveth to make interceſſion for us. The Apoſtle ſaith, Hee is made of God for us, wiſedome, righteouſneſſe, ſanctification, and redemption. Marke that he ſaith, All is for us, all is for his Church, for every member of his Church, and therefore for you. Chriſt is made of God righteouſneſſe, ſanctification, & redemption for you: Chriſt is your Mediator, and your high Prieſt, & hath offred up the everlaſting ſacrifice, even for you, that he might pay your ranſome, & redeeme you from all

1 John 1.

Rom. 3. 25.

Heb. 7. 25.

1 Cor. 1. 30.

Heb.9.12. all eternity. By his owne bloud hath hee entred once into the holy place, and obtained eternall redemption for you. Christ is not entred into the holy places which are made with hands, which are similitudes of the true sanctuary, but is entred into the very heaven, to appeare now in the sight of God for you. The Apostle saith, He hath made him to be sin for you, that knew no sin, that you might be made the righteousnesse of God in him. Christ was made a curse for you, that hee might redeeme you from the curse of the Law. Oh therefore how happy art thou that hast such a Mediatour and high Priest! Rest therefore wholly upon him, and upon that perfect, eternall, and propitiatorie sacrifice which he hath once offered. Apply Christ, apply his merits, apply the promises to your selfe, and to your owne conscience, so shall they doe you good, and bring great comfort to your soule. For put case you had a most excellent and soveraigne salve, which would cure any wound, if it were laid to; yet if you should locke it up in your chest, and never apply it to your wound, what good could it doe you? Even so the righteousnesse and merits of Christ are a soveraigne salve, which will cure any wound of the soule: but if wee doe not apply them

Heb.9.

2 Cor.5.21.

Gal.3.13.

to

to our soules by faith, they can doe us no good. You must therefore apply Christ, and all the promises of the Gospel, to your selfe by faith, and stand fully perswaded, that whatsoever hee hath done upon the Crosse, hee hath done for you particularly. For what is justifying faith, but a full perswasion of Gods particular love to us in Christ? The generall and confused knowledge of Christ and his Gospel availes not to eternall life. Labour therefore to have the true use of all these great and precious promises, and sticke fast to Christ: for through him only we have remission of sins, and eternall life. To him all the Prophets give witnesse (saith St. Peter) that through his Name all that beleeve shall receive remission of their sins. Where the Apostle tells us, that if a great Jury of Prophets were pannelled to testifie of the way and meanes to eternall life, they would all, with one consent, bring in a verdict, that remission of sins and eternall life are onely in Christ. Let us heare the Fore-man speak, and one or two of the rest: for in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word stand. The Prophet Esay saith, Hee was wounded for our transgressions, he was broken for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him,

Acts 10. 43.

Esay 53. 5.

him, and with his ſtripes we are healed. This great Prophet we ſee plainely affirms, that Chriſt ſuffered for our ſins, and by his ſuffering we are ſaved. The Prophet Jeremy teſtifies the ſame thing, ſaying, Behold, the day is come (ſaith the Lord) that I will raiſe to *David* a righteous branch, and a King ſhall reigne and proſper, and ſhall execute judgement and juſtice in the earth. In his dayes *Judah* ſhall be ſaved, and *Iſrael* ſhall dwell ſafely: and this is the name whereby they ſhall call him, The Lord our righteouſneſſe. This Prophet jumps with the other. For he ſaith, that Chriſt is the righteous branch, and that he is our righteouſneſſe: which is all one as if hee had ſaid our ſins are pardoned onely through him, and through him we are made righteous. Moreover hee affirms, that Juda and Iſrael, that is, the Church, ſhall be ſaved by him. The Prophet Zacharie, that I may ſpeake it with reverence, telleth the ſame tale word for word. Hee avoucheth the ſame thing with the other two Prophets: for he ſaith, In that day a fountaine ſhall be opened to the houſe of *David*, and to the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, for ſin, and for uncleanneſſe. The meaning of the Prophet is, that in the dayes of Chriſts kingdome the fountaine of Gods mercy, in Chriſt,

Jer. 23. 5.

Zech. 13. 1.

Christ, should be opened and let-out to wash away the sins and uncleanesse of the Church. So then we see, that these three great witnesses doe all agree in this, that through Christ onely we are washed from our sinnes, and through him onely wee are made righteous. Seeing then that eternall life is onely in the Son, therefore he that hath the Son, hath life. Be of good courage therefore, O Asunetus: for no doubt you have the Son, and therefore eternall life. Feare not your sins, for they cannot hurt you: for as all the righteousnesse of Abraham, Isaak, and Jacob, and all the most righteous men that ever lived on the face of the earth, if it were yours, could doe you no good without Christ: so all the sin in the world, can doe you no hurt being in Christ; For there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Pluck up a good heart therefore: be no more heavie and sad: for if you be found in Christ, clothed with his perfect righteousnes (being made yours through faith) what can the divell say to you? what can the Law doe? They may well hisse at you, but they cannot sting you: they may grin at you, but they cannot hurt you. For who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect? It is God that justifies,

Rom. 8. 33.

who shall condemne? It is Christ which is dead, or rather which is risen againe; who also sitteth at the right hand of God, and makes request for us. Phil.4.4. Rejoyce in the Lord therefore, againe I say Rejoyce: for greater is he that is in you, then hee that is in the world: Our Lord Jesus is stronger then all. None can plucke you out of his hands: he is a strong Mediator: hee hath conquered all our spirituall enemies: he hath overcome hell, death, and damnation: he hath led captivity captive: Col.2.15. he hath spoyled principalities and powers, and hath made an open shew of them, and triumphed over them on his croſſe. Hee hath most triumphantly said, Hos.13.14. O death, I will be thy death: O grave, I will be thy destruction. O death, where is thy sting? O hell, where is thy victory? 1 Cor.15.55 Seeing then you have such a Mediator and high Priest, as hath conquered the hellish army, and subdued all infernall power, what need you to doubt? what need you to feare any more? Moreover, you are to understand, and to be perswaded, that Gods mercy is exceeding great towards penitent sinners, and all such as mourne for their trangressions: according as he saith, At what time soever a sinner doth repent him of his sinnes from the bottome of his heart, he will put them all

all out of his remembrance. **The Prophet** David **doth most lively and fully describe unto us, the mercifull nature of God, in the** 103. **Psalme, where hee saith,** The Lord is full of compassion, and mercy, slow to anger, and of great kindnesse: he will not alwaies chide, neither keepeth his anger for ever: he hath not dealt with us after our sinnes, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heaven is above the earth, so great is his mercy towards those that feare him. As farre as is the East from the West, so farre hath he removed our sinnes from us. As a Father hath compassion on his children, so hath the Lord compassion on them that feare him. For he knowes whereof we be made, he remembreth that we are but dust. **The History of the lost sonne doth most notably set forth the wonderfull mercy of God towards penitent sinners. There is shewed how the Lord doth embrace, tender, and make much of such poore sinners,** Luk. 15. 20. **as have broken and contrite hearts for their sinnes: for it is said, that when the Father saw his repenting Son a great way off, hee had compassion on him, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him, & cloathed him with the best robe, put it on him, put a ring on his hand, and shooes**

on his feet, and cauſed the fat calfe to be killed for him. Even ſo the everlaſting Father doth rejoyce at the converſion of any of his loſt ſonnes. Yea, there is joy in the preſence of the Angels of God for one ſinner that converteth. Moreover, the Lord moſt lively expreſſeth his mercifull nature and diſpoſition in this, That he is very loth we ſhould periſh, & willingly caſt away our ſelves. Therefore often in the holy Scriptures hee mourns for us, bewailes our wretchedneſſe, and takes up many pitifull complaints and lamentations for us, ſaying, O that my people had hearkened unto me, and Iſrael had walked in my waies. And again; O that thou hadſt hearkened unto my commandements: then had thy proſperity been as the floud, and thy righteouſneſſe as the waters of the ſea. Againe, he mourningly complaines by his Prophet Hoſea, ſaying, O Ephraim, what ſhall I doe to thee? O Juda, how ſhall I intreat thee? And in another place, What could I doe more to my Vineyard that I have not done? Marke here how compaſſionately the Almighty God doth yerne over us, and even as it were bleed upon our ſwounds. The Apoſtle alſo notes the rich mercy and marvellous love of God to mankinde, in this, that hee

Pſal. 81. 13.

Iſay 48. 18.

Eſay 5.

hee doth beſeech us, and pray us by the Miniſters of the Goſpel, that we would bee reconciled unto him. The words are theſe, : Now then are wee Embaſſadors for Chriſt; as though God did beſeech you through us, we pray you in Chriſts ſtead, that you bee reconciled unto God. Is it not a ſtrange thing, that the omnipotent God ſhould fall to entreating of us poore wretches? It is all one, as if a King ſhould intreat a beggar, whom he may will and command. But the abundant mercy of God towards mankind doth moſt of all conſiſt in this, That he hath given his onely Son for us, when we were his enemies; as it is written, God ſo loved the world, that he hath given his only begotten Son, that whoſoever beleeves in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life. Againe, God ſets out his love towards us, ſeeing that while we were yet ſinners, Chriſt died for us: much more then being now juſtified by his bloud, we ſhall be ſaved from wrath through him. For if when wee were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Sonne: much more being reconciled, we ſhall be ſaved by his life. In all this then wee may cleerely behold the infinite mercy of God towards us poore ſinners. For is it not a great matter,

Joha 3.

Rom. 5. 1.

that the Son of God should take our nature upon him, should be so abased as he was, and should humble himselfe to death, even to the death of the crosse? For as the shadow of the Dial went backe ten degrees, that Ezechias might receive length of dayes and much happinesse; so Christ, the Son of righteousnesse, hath gone backe many degrees, that we might haue eternall life. His humiliation therefore is our exaltation, his sufferings our joy, his death our life. For we have no other remedy or refuge but only his merits and righteousnes. He is our City of refuge, whither we must flie, and where we must take sanctuary. He is the balme of Gilead, whereby our soules are cured. He is that poole of Bethesda, where every man may be cured of what disease soever he hath. He is the river of Jordan, where Naaman may wash away all his leprosie. He is that Pelican, who by pecking a hole in his own breast, doth restore his young to life againe by his blood. Yet one thing we must note by the way, which hath been partly touched before, That all the mercies of God, and merits of Christ, are to be restrained only to the Elect, only to the true members of the Church; as plainely appeareth in Psal. 103. where the mercies of God, which are there largely

Phil. 2. 8.

Jer. 9.

John 5. 2.

2. Kings 5.

largely described, are restrained only to them that feare him, keep his covenant, and think upon his Commandements to doe them. And touching Christ it is said, that hee is a Prince and a Saviour unto Israel, and that he shall redeeme Israel from all his iniquities. Againe it is written, that Christ being consecrate, was made the Author of eternall salvation to them that obey him. None doe or can obey him but only the Elect, therefore he is the Author of salvation onely to the Elect. And consequently, the prophane world, whatsoever they say, whatsoever they brag and boast, have no true title, or interest in him. This thing was figured in the Law, in this, that the mercy-seat, which was a type of Gods mercy in Christ, and the Arke, which was a figure of the Church, were, by the expresse commandement of God, fitted each to other, both in length and breadth. For as the Arke was two cubits and a halfe long, and a cubit and a halfe broad; just so was the Mercy-seat. Noting thereby, that the mercy of God in Christ should onely bee fitted to his Church, and belong onely to the Church; so as not one without the Church should bee saved. For hee that hath not the Church for his Mother, cannot have God for his

Psal. 130.

Heb. 5. 6.

Exod. 25. 10.

Father. Lastly, wee are to observe, that as God is infinite in mercy, and of great compassion toward penitent sinners; so also is hee most constant in the course of his mercies towards his children. And therefore one of the Psalmes carries this foot, His
Psal. 136. mercy endureth for ever, his mercie endureth for ever, his mercy endureth for ever. Noting thereby both the constancie and eternitie of Gods mercy. To the same purpose it is
Lam. 3. 22. thus written, It is the Lords mercie that we are not consumed, it is because his compassions faile not. Let us know therefore that God, as touching his mercy to his children, is of a most constant and unchangeable nature. As hee saith, I am the Lord, I change not. For if God were of a changeable nature, as wee are, and subject to passions, then were we in a most miserable case, then must he needs smite us downe, and take vengeance of us every day, and every houre in the day, because we provoke him every day, and every houre in the day. But the God of heaven is not as a man, that he should be subject to passions and affections: he is of a most constant and immutable nature. For though we provoke him every day with new sins, yet is he so farre off from taking

king revenge, that the next day hee rewardeth us with new mercies, and breaketh through all our unkindnesse to shew kindnesse unto us; and through all our naughtinesse to doe us good. All our infirmities cannot make him breake off with us, or cease to love us. Hee is content to take us with all faults, and to love us dearely, though wee have great faults. Hee regardeth not our infirmities: though wee bee oftentimes wayward and elvish, yet for all that hee loveth us nevertheleſſe. Even as a loving Mother, though her young suckling cry all the night, and be exceeding treake and wayward, so as shee cannot rest an houre in the night; yea, though shee endure much lothsomnesse and trouble with it, yet in the morning when shee riseth she loveth it never the leſſe, but dandleth it, playeth with it, smileth & laugheth upon it: so the God of all mercies, whose love towards us far passeth the love of mothers, though we grieve him with our infirmities continually, yet loveth us nevertheleſſe, and is content to put up all, to forget and forgive all; for he is a most constant lover. Where he once sets and settles his love, hee loveth most constantly, nothing can alter him, nothing can remove him. Even as a Father, when his

little childe catcheth a fall, breaketh his shinnes, and hurteth his face, is so farre from being offended or displeased with him therefore, that hee doth pity him and bemone him, seeking remedies for his hurt: so our mercifull Father is so farre off from being angry and displeased with us for some slips and falls, that hee doth the more pity us, and lament our case. Even as a loving and wise husband, although his wife have many infirmities, yet being assured shee loves him dearely, and that her heart is with him, he is well content to winke at all her faults, to hide them, to beare with them; yea, and to make nothing of them; loving her no whit the lesse for them: so our deare husband and Spouse, Christ Jesus, because he knoweth wee love him, and that hee hath our hearts, is content to beare with all our infirmities, and to make light of them. For this cause it is that he saith to his Spouse in the Canticles, though shee was black and full of infirmities,

Cant. 4. 1. 7. Behold thou art all faire, my Love: Behold, thou art faire: thou art all faire, my Love: there is no spot in thee. Marke, that hee calleth his Church faire, all faire, and without spot; not because shee was so in her selfe, but because she was made so in him:

him: and assuredly the eternall God, beholding her in his Son, doth so esteem and account of her. For as he that beholdeth any thing through a red glasse, doth take it to be red, as is the colour of the glasse: so God the Father, beholding us in his Sonne, doth take us to be of the same nature and quality that hee is; that is, perfectly righteous. For this cause it is that hee loveth us, and setteth his heart upon us, & will not be removed from us. For his love to his children is alwaies one & the same, although we have not alwaies the like sight & feeling of it: as the Moone is alwaies the same in substance and quantity, though sometimes it seemeth unto us to be wasted into a very small scantling. Let us know then to our great comfort, that the love of God towards us, in his deare Son, is constant, and alwaies alike; and that hee will not discountenance us, or shake us off for some infirmities, no nor yet for many infirmities: for the mercifull God doth accept of his children, because their generall care is good, and the universall tenour of their life tendeth unto righteousnesse, howsoever they may greatly faile in many particular actions. Two or three fits of an ague doe not prove a diseased body; nor two or three good daies a sound

Our Sins too [illegible] Gods [illegible]

body:

body: even so some few infirmities doe not argue a wicked man; nor two or three good actions, a good man: but wee must have an eye to the certaine and settled course of a mans life. Even as men are truly said to walke in a way, when they goe in it, although sometimes they trip and stumble: so Gods children doe walke in the way of righteousnesse, although sometimes they stumble and step out of it, or sometimes bee violently haled out of it by theeves. For Satan and the violence of our lusts doe often hale us out of the way: but wee must get into it againe as soone as wee are escaped. Now then, to conclude and draw to an end, Sith God is so infinitely mercifull, and constant in his mercy: sith such great and pretious promises are made to us in Christ: sith the Lord doth not regard our infirmities when our hearts are with him: therefore, O Asunetus, bee of good cheere, let nothing trouble you; feare not the assaultes of the Dibell, regard not his temptations: for assuredly your sinnes are forgiven. Christ is yours: heaven is yours: and all the promises of life & salvation belong unto you. So as you need not doubt; you cannot miscarry: your name is written in the Booke of life.

Asun.

Asin. I am greatly comforted and cheered up with your words. Your preaching of the Gospel, and laying open of Gods aboundant mercy in Christ, and of the promises, do exceedingly revive me, and even as it were put new life into me: they are as Sacke and Sugar unto my soule, and sweeter than the honey and the honey-combe: they are as physicke to my sicke soule, and as ointment to my spirituall wounds. I doe now begin to see what misery is in man, and what mercy is in God. And I know by wofull experience, that where misery is not felt, there mercy is not regarded: but now it hath pleased God to give me some feeling of mine owne wretchednesse and misery, and yet with good comfort in his mercy. For I thanke God for it, I begin now to grow to some perswasion, that the promises do belong unto mee, my sinnes are forgiven, and that I am one of them that shall be saved.

Theol. I doe greatly rejoyce, that God hath, according to his rich mercy, wrought this good worke in you. I doe, from the bottom of my heart, give him the praise and glory of it. Happie are you that ever you were borne, in whom the Lord hath wrought so gracious a worke. It is his high favour and speciall mercy towards

towards you: for it is the only priviledge and prerogative royall of Gods owne children, truely to repent and beleeve. I beseech God therefore to encrease your faith, and to fill you full of joy and peace in beleeving, that you may abound in hope, through the power of the holy Ghost.

Antil. The Sun drawes low: *Asunetus*, it is time for you and me to be going.

Phil. Indeed the night will approach by and by, and therefore we must of necessitie breake off.

Theol. **Sith it is so, we will here surcease, and goe no further.**

Asun. Sir, I will now take my leave of you: I can never be thankfull enough for all the good instructions and comforts which I have heard from you this day: I hope I shall remember some of them whilest I live. I do therefore praise God for you, and for your counsell, and for this day, which I hope shall be the first day of my repentance and true conversion unto God.

Theol. **The Lord for his infinite mercies sake grant it. And I most humbly beseech the Almighty God to establish you with his free spirit, that you may proceed and goe forward in a Christian course unto the end.**

Phil. I pray you, good M. *Theologus*, pardon my boldnesse, for you see I have

have beene very bold to propound many questions unto you, wherein you have fully satisfied me, to the great joy and comfort of my soule. I doe therefore praise God for you, and I hope I shall never forget some things which you have uttered. But I will now commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build us further.

Theol. Farewell good Philagathus.

The Lord blesse you, and keepe you in all your wayes: and the God of heaven preserve us all, and continue us in his feare unto the end.

All glory be given to God.

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FINIS.

A Morning Prayer to be used in private Families.

O Lord our God, and heavenly Father, we thy unworthy children doe here come into thy most holy and heavenly presence, to give thee praise and glory for all thy great mercies and manifold blessings toward us, especially for that thou hast preserved us this night past from all the dangers and feares thereof, hast given us quiet rest to our bodies, and brought us now safely to the beginning of this day, and doest now afresh renew all thy mercies upon us, as the Eagle reneweth her bill; giving us all things aboundantly to enjoy, as food, raiment, health, peace, liberty, and freedome from many miseries, diseases, casualties, and calamities which we are subject to in this life every minute of an houre: and not only so, but also for vouchsafing unto us many good things, not onely for necessity, but even for delight also. But above all (dear Father) we praise thy name for the blessings of a better life, specially for thy most holy Word and Sacraments, and all the good we enjoy thereby; for the continuance of the Gospel amongst us, for the death of thy Sonne, and all that happinesse which

which we have thereby; alſo becauſe thou haſt choſen us to life before we were, and that of thy meere goodneſſe and undeſerved favour toward us; and haſt called us in thine appointed time, juſtified us by thy grace, and ſanctified us by thy ſpirit, and adopted us to be thine owne children, and heires apparent to the great Crown. O Lord open our eyes every day more and more, to ſee and conſider of thy great and marvellous love to us in all theſe things; that by the due conſideration thereof, our hearts may bee drawne yet neerer unto thee, even more to love thee, feare thee, and obey thee: that as thou art enlarged towards us in mercy, ſo we may be enlarged towards thee in thankſgiving: and as thou doſt abound towards us in goodneſſe, ſo we may abound towards thee in obedience and love. And ſith (dear Father) thou art never weary of doing us good, notwithſtanding all our unworthineſſe and naughtineſſe, therefore let the conſideration of thy great mercy and fatherly kindneſſe towards us, even as it were force our hearts, and compell us to come into thy moſt glorious preſence, with new ſongs of thankſgiving in our mouthes. We pray thee (O moſt mercifull God) to forgive all our unthankfulneſſe, unkindneſſe, profaneneſſe, and great abuſing of all thy mercies, and eſpecially our abuſe and

contempt

contempt of thy Gospel, together with all other the sins of our life, which we confesse are innumerable, and more then can be reckoned up, both in omission of good things, and commission of evill. We most humbly intreat thee to set them all over to the reckoning which thy Son Christ hath made up for them upon his crosse, and never to lay any of them to our charge, but freely forget all, and forgive all. Naile down all our sins and iniquites to the Crosse of Christ, burie them in his death, bathe them in his bloud, hide them in his wounds, let them never rise up in judgement against us. Set us free of the miseries that are upon us for sin, and keep back the judgments to come, both of soule, body, goods, and good name. Be reconciled unto us in thy dear Son concerning all matters past, not once remembring or repeating unto us our old and abominable iniquities, but accept us as righteous in him, imputing his righteousnesse to us, and our sins to him. Let his righteousnesse satisfie thy justice for all our unrighteousnesse, his obedience for our disobedience, his perfection for our imperfection. Moreover, wee humbly beseech thy good Majestie to give us the true sight and feeling of our manifold sins, that wee may not be blinded in them through

delight; or hardened in them through cuſtome, as the reprobates are: but that wee may be even weary of them, and much grieved for them, labouring and ſtriving by all poſsible meanes to get out of them. Good Father touch our hearts with true repentance for all ſinne. Let not us take any delight or pleaſure in any ſinne, but howſoever we fall through frailty (as we fall often) let us never fall finally, let us never lie downe in ſin, nor continue in ſinne: but let us get up on our feet againe, and turne to thee with all our hearts, and ſeeke thee whileſt thou maiſt bee found, and whileſt thou doſt offer grace and mercy unto us. O Lord increaſe in us that true and lively faith, whereby wee may lay ſure hold on thy Son Chriſt, and reſt upon his merits altogether. Give us faith aſſuredly to beleeve all thy great and precious promiſes made in the Goſpel, and ſtrengthen us from above to walke and abound in all the true and ſound fruits of faith. Let us walke, not after the fleſh, but after the ſpirit. Let us feele the power of thy Sons death killing ſinne in our mortall bodies, and the power of his reſurrection raiſing us up to newneſſe of life. Let us grow daily in the ſanctification of the ſpirit, and the mortification of the fleſh. Let us live holily, juſtly, and ſoberly in this

preſent

preſent evill world, ſhewing forth the vertues of thee in all our particular actions, that we may adorne our moſt holy profeſsion, and ſhine as lights in the midſt of a crooked and froward generation amongſt whom we live, being gainefull to all by our lives and converſation, and offenſive to none. To this end wee pray thee fill us with thy ſpirit, and all ſpirituall graces, as love, wiſdome, patience, contentment, meekneſſe, humility, temperance, chaſtity, kindneſſe, and affability; and ſtirre us up to uſe prayer and watchfulneſſe, reading and meditation in thy Law, and all other good meanes whereby we may grow and abound in all heavenly vertues. Bleſſe us in the uſe of the meanes from day to day, make us ſuch as thou wouldeſt have us to be, and ſuch as we deſire to be: worke in us both will and deed, purpoſe and power: For thou, O Lord, art all in all, thou wilt have mercy upon whom thou wilt have mercy, and whom thou wilt thou hardeneſt. Have mercy upon us therefore (deare Father) and never leave us to our ſelves, nor to our owne wils, luſts, and deſires, but aſſiſt us with thy good ſpirit, that wee may continue to the end in a righteous courſe; that ſo at length wee may be received into glory, and be partakers of that immortall Crowne which thou haſt

laid up for all that love thee, and truly call upon thee.

Further, we intreat thee, O heavenly father, to give us all things necessary for this life: as food, raiment, health, peace, liberty, and such freedome from those manifold miseries which wee lie open unto every day, as thou seest meet. Blesse unto us all the meanes which thou hast put into our hands for the sustenance of this fraile life. Blesse our flocke and store, corne and cattle, trades and occupations, and all workes of our hands: for thy blessing onely makes rich, and it bringeth no sorrows with it. Give us therefore such a competency and sufficiency of these outward blessings, as thou in thy heavenly wisdome seest most needfull for us. Moreover, wee humbly beseech thee (most loving Father) in great mercy looke downe from heaven upon thy whole Church, and every member of it. Be favourable unto *Sion*, and build up the wals of *Jerusalem*. Behold with the eye of pity, the great ruines and desolation of thy Church. Heale up the wounds, and make up the breaches thereof in all nations. Regard it as thine owne flock, tender it as thine own family, dresse it as thine own Vineyard, love it as thine owne Spouse. Thinke thoughts of peace to it, and alwaies looke upon it in deep compassion. Blesse it

it with thy grace, guide it with thy ſpirit, and defend it ſtill with thy mighty power: ſcatter the deviges, confound the counſels, and overthrow the forces of all that fight againſt it. Specially we intreat thee, deare Father, to ſet thy ſelfe againſt that Antichriſt of *Rome*, that man of perdition, which ſetteth himſelfe againſt thee, and againſt all thy people. In thine appointed time we pray thee give him a deadly downfall: Beat down all his power and authority daily more and more; give free paſſage to thy Goſpel in all Kingdomes, that *Babylon* may fall, and never riſe up againe. The more the favourites and adherents of *Rome* labour to uphold their Idolatrous kingdome, the more let it fall downe, even as *Dagon* before the preſence of thine Arke. Poure downe the Vials of the fulneſſe of thy wrath upon the Kingdomes of the Beaſt; and let their riches, wealth, credit and authoritie dry up every day more and more, as the River *Euphrates*. Let it pitie thee, O Father, to ſee thine own Spouſe ſit as a deformed and forlorn woman here below, weeping and mourning with her hair about her neck, having loſt all her beauty and comelineſſe: Cheere her up (dear Father) glad her with the joy of thy countenance, and ſo deck her,

and trimme her up, that thou maiſt delight in her as a Bridegroome in his Bride. Specially wee intreat thee have mercie upon thy Church in this Land; intend good unto us, and not evill: give us not over into the hands of our cruell enemies, as our ſins have deſerved. Scatter we pray thee, O Lord, the devices, and breake the plots of all ſuch as have plotted the overthrow and utter ſubverſion of this Church and Common-wealth. Bleſſe this Church more and more with the continuance of true Religion amongſt us: for thy great Names ſake, and infinite mercies ſake, deale graciouſly and favourably with us and our poſteritie. Turne from us that vengeance which is due to us for our ſinnes. For thou ſeeſt how iniquity prevaileth, and the wicked goe away with the goale. Atheiſme over-ſpreadeth every where, and Popery ſeemeth to get a head againe. Now therefore (deare Father) we moſt humbly beſeech thee to take order ſpeedily for the remedying and repreſſing of theſe manifold diſorders and grievous enormities that are amongſt us. Be intreated of thy poore children to bee good to this Engliſh Nation. Heare the cries of thine Elect: heare the mourning of them that mourne in Sion. Let the cries of thy children cry downe all the cries of

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the ſins of the Land, and be reconciled unto us in the multitude of thy compaſsions; that ſo thou maiſt ſtill continue a moſt mercifull protector of this thine Engliſh vineyard. Wee pray thee (good Father) ſhew ſpeciall mercy to our moſt Noble and gracious King *Charles*, thine annointed ſervant, bleſſe him and keepe him in all his wayes, bleſſe his government unto us. Let thine Angels encamp about him, and let thy holy hand be alwayes over him; keepe him from treaſons, and deliver him from the treacheries of his enemies: give him to ſee what belongs to his peace, and give him a heart earneſtly bent to ſet upon the practice of the ſame: give him all graces neceſſary for his place, and neceſſary for his ſalvation: continue his government peaceable and proſperous amongſt us: and as thou haſt made him the breath of our noſtrils, and a gracious inſtrument for the ſaving of many thouſand ſoules, ſo let his owne ſoule be ſaved in the day of thy Son Chriſt. Bleſſe his Majeſties moſt honourable privie Counſellours, and give ſuch good ſucceſſe unto all their counſels and policies in matters of State, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godlineſſe and honeſty. Bleſſe all the Nobility, worke in them a care to glorifie thy name in their places; make

them faithfull to thee, and faithfull to the Land. Direct with thy good ſpirit all ſuch as beare the ſword of juſtice, that they may draw it out to puniſh the wicked, and to defend the godly, and that they may with all good care and conſcience diſcharge the duties of their places. Increaſe the number of faithfull and zealous Miniſters in this Church. Send thy Goſpel to thoſe places where it is not, and bleſſe it where it is. Remember them in thy mercy, O Lord, that are under any croſſe or affliction whatſoever: be comfortable unto them, heale up their wounds, bind up their ſores, put all their teares into thy bottle, and make their bed in all their ſorrowes, and put ſuch a good end to all their troubles, that they may redound to thy glory, and the furtherance of their owne ſalvation. In the mean time give them patience and conſtancie to beare whatſoever it ſhall pleaſe thy mercifull hand to lay upon them. Laſt of all, in a word, we pray thee bleſſe the Magiſtracie, Miniſterie, and Commonalty. Bleſſe all the people, doe good to all that are true and upright in their hearts. And ſo (dear Father) we doe commit and commend our ſelves, our ſoules and bodies, into thy hands, for this day and the reſt of our life, praying thee to take care and charge of us. Keep us from all evill, watch over us

for

for our good, let thine Angels encamp about us, let thy holy hand be over us, and keepe us in all our waies, that we may live to thy praise and glory here on earth, keeping faith and a good conscience in all our actions; that after this life we may be crowned of thee for ever in thy kingdome. Grant these things (good Father) to us here present, and to all thine absent, praying thee in speciall favour to remember all our friends and kinsfolkes in the flesh, all our good neighbours and well-willers, and all those for whom wee are bound to pray, by nature, by deserts, or any duty whatsoever, for Jesus Christs sake our only Mediator, To whom, with thee, and the holy Ghost, bé given all praise and glory, both now and for evermore, *Amen.*

An Evening Prayer to be usd in private Families.

OEternall God, and our most loving and dear Father, wee thy unworthy children doe here fall downe at the foot of thy great Majestie, acknowledging from our hearts that we are altogether unworthy to come neere thee, or to looke towards thee, because thou art a God of infinite glory, and we are most vile and abominable sinners, such as were conceived and borne in sinne and corruption, and such as have inherited our Fathers corruptions, and also have actually transgressed all thy holy statutes and lawes, both in thoughts, words, and deeds, before we knew thee and since, secretly and openly, with our selves and with others, our particular sins are moe then can be numbred; for who knoweth how often he offendeth? but this we must needs confesse against our selves, that our hearts are full of pride, covetousnesse, and the love of this world, full of wrath, anger, and impatience, full of lying, dissembling, and deceiving, full of vanitie, hardnesse, and profanenesse, full of infidelity, distrust, and selfe-love, full of lust, uncleannesse, and all abominable desires:

ſires: yea, our hearts are the very ſinkes of ſin, and dunghils of all filthineſſe. And beſides all this, we doe omit the good things we ſhould doe: for there are in us great wants of faith, of love, of zeale, of patience, of contentment, and of every good grace: ſo as thou haſt juſt cauſe to proceed to ſentence of judgement againſt us, as moſt damnable tranſgreſſours of all thy holy commandements, yea, ſuch as are ſunk in our rebellions, and have many times and often committed high treaſon againſt thy Majeſty; and therefore thou maiſt juſtly caſt us all downe into hell fire, there to be tormented with Satan and his Angels for ever. And we have nothing to except againſt thy Majeſty for ſo doing, ſith therein thou ſhouldeſt deale with us but according to equity, and our juſt deſerts. Wherefore, deare Father, we doe appeale from thy juſtice to thy mercy, moſt humbly intreating thee to have mercy upon us, and freely to forgive us all our ſins paſt whatſoever, both new and old, ſecret and open, knowne and unknowne, and that for Jeſus Chriſts ſake our onely Mediatour. And wee pray thee touch our hearts with true griefe, and unfained repentance for them, that they may bee a matter of continuall ſorrow and heart-ſmart unto us, ſo

as

as nothing may grieve us more than this, that we have offended thee, being our ſpeciall friend and Father: Give us therefore (dear Father) every day more and more ſight and feeling of our ſins, with true humiliation under the ſame. Give us alſo that true and lively faith, whereby we may lay ſure hold on thy Son Chriſt, and all his merits, applying the ſame to our owne ſoules; ſo as we may ſtand fully perſwaded, that whatſoever he hath done upon the croſſe, hee hath done for us particularly as well as for others. Give us faith (good Father) conſtantly to beleeve all the ſweet promiſes of the Goſpel, touching remiſſion of ſinne, and eternall life, made in thy Son Chriſt. O Lord increaſe our faith, that we may altogether reſt upon thy promiſes, which are all Yea and Amen. Yea, that we may ſettle our ſelves, and all that we have, wholly upon them; both our ſoules, bodies, goods, name, wives, children, and our whole eſtate: knowing that all things depend upon thy promiſes, power, and providence, and that thy Word doth ſupport and beare up the whole order of nature. Moreover, wee entreat thee, O Lord, to ſtrengthen us from above, to walke in every good way, and to bring forth the fruits of true faith in all our particular actions, ſtudying to pleaſe thee in all things,

and

and to be fruitfull in good workes, that we may ſhew forth unto all men by our good converſation whoſe children we are: and that we may adorne and beautifie our moſt holy profeſsion, by walking in a Chriſtian courſe, and in all the ſound fruits and practice of godlineſſe and true religion. To this end we pray thee ſanctifie our hearts by thy ſpirit yet more and more: ſanctifie our ſoules and bodies, and all our corrupt naturall faculties, as reaſon, underſtanding, will, and affections, ſo as they may bee fitted for thy worſhip and ſervice, taking a delight and pleaſure therein. Stir us up to uſe prayer, watchfulneſſe, reading, meditation in thy Law, and all other good meanes whereby we may profit in grace and goodneſſe from day to day. Bleſſe us in the uſe of the meanes, that we may daily die to ſinne and live to righteouſneſſe: draw us yet neerer unto thee, helpe us againſt our manifold wants. Amend our great imperfections, renew us inwardly more and more, repaire the ruines of our hearts, aide us againſt the remnants of ſinne. Enlarge our hearts to run the way of thy Commandements, direct all our ſteps in thy word, let none iniquity have dominion over us. Aſsiſt us againſt our ſpeciall infirmities and maſter-ſinnes, that we may get the victory over them all, to thy glory, and the

great

great peace and comfort of our owne conſciences. Strengthen us, good Father, by thy grace and holy ſpirit, againſt the common corruptions of the world, as pride, whoredome, covetouſneſſe, contempt of thy Goſpel, ſwearing, lying, diſſembling, and deceiving. O dear Father, let us not be overcome of theſe filthy vices, nor any other ſinfull pleaſures and fond delights, wherewith thouſands are carried headlong to deſtruction. Arme our ſoules againſt all the temptations of this world, the fleſh and the divell, that we may overcome them all through thy help, and keepe on the right way to life; that wee may live in thy feare, and die in thy favour; that our laſt dayes may be our beſt dayes, and that we may end in great peace of conſcience. Furthermore, dear Father, we intreat thee not onely for our ſelves, but for all our good brethren, thy deare children, ſcattered over the face of the whole earth, moſt humbly beſeeching thee to bleſſe them all, to cheere them up, and glad them with the joy of thy countenance, both now and alwaies. Guide them all in thy feare, and keep them from evill, that they may praiſe thy name. In theſe dangerous dayes, and declining times, we pray thee, O Lord, raiſe up nurſing Fathers and nurſing Mothers unto thy Church. Raiſe

up

up alſo faithfull Paſtors, that thy cauſe may be carried forward, Truth may prevaile, Religion may proſper, thy Name only may be ſet up in the earth, thy Sons Kingdome advanced, and thy will accompliſhed. Set thy ſelfe againſt all adverſary power, eſpecially that of Rome, Antichriſt, Idolatry, and Atheiſme; curſe and croſſe all their counſels, fruſtrate their devices, ſcatter their forces, overthrow their armies. When they are moſt wiſe, let them be moſt fooliſh: when they are moſt ſtrong, let them be moſt weake. Let them know that there is no wiſedome nor counſell, power nor policie, againſt thee the Lord of hoſts. Let them know that *Iſrael* hath a God, and that thou which art called *Jehovah* art the onely Ruler over all the world. Ariſe therefore, O moſt mighty God, and maintaine thine owne cauſe againſt all thine enemies, ſmite thorow all their loynes, and bow downe their backes: yea, let them all bee confounded and turned backward that beare ill will unto *Sion*. Let the patient abiding of the righteous be joy, and let the wicked bee diſappointed of their hope. But of all favour wee intreat thee, O Lord, to ſhew ſpecial mercy to thy Church in this land wherein we live. Continue thy Goſpel amongſt us yet with greater

greater ſucceſſe, purge thy houſe daily more and more, take away all things that offend. Let this Nation ſtill be a place where thy name may bee called upon, and an harbour for thy Saints. Shew mercy to our poſteritie, dear Father, and have care of them, that thy Goſpel may be left unto them as a moſt holy inheritance. Defend us againſt forraine invaſion, keepe out Idolatrie and Popery from amongſt us. Turne from us thoſe plagues which our ſins cry for. For the ſins of this Land are exceeding great, horrible, and out-rageous, and give thee juſt cauſe to make us ſpectacles of thy vengeance to all Nations, that by how much the more thou haſt lifted us up in great mercy and long peace, by ſo much the more thou ſhouldeſt preſſe us down in great wrath and long war. Therefore, dear Father, wee moſt humbly intreat thee, for thy great names ſake, and for thy infinite mercies ſake, that thou wouldeſt bee reconciled to this Land, and diſcharge it of all the horrible ſins thereof. Drown them, O Lord, in thy infinite mercie through Chriſt, as it were in a bottomleſſe gulfe, that they may never riſe up in judgement againſt us. For although our ſins be exceeding many and fearefull, yet thy mercy is farre greater. For thou art infinite in mercy, but we cannot be infinite in ſinning. Give us

not over into the hands of the Idolaters, leſt they ſhould blaſpheme thy name, and ſay, Where is their God in whom they truſted? But rather, dear Father, take us into thine own hands, and correct us according to thy wiſedome: for with thee is mercy and deep compaſsion. Moreover, we moſt heartily beſeech thy good Majeſty to bleſſe our moſt gracious Soveraigne King *Charles*, Queen *Mary*, Prince *Charles*, and the reſt of the Royall Progenie. We beſeech thee alſo to bleſſe his Majeſties moſt honourable privie Counſellours, counſell them from above, let them take advice of thee in all things, that they may both conſult and reſolve of ſuch courſes as may be moſt for thy glory, the good of the Church, and peace of this our Common-wealth. Bleſſe the Nobility, and all the Magiſtrates of the Land, giving them all grace to execute judgment and juſtice, and to maintaine truth and equitie. Bleſſe all the faithfull Miniſters of the Goſpel, increaſe the number of them, increaſe thy gifts in them, and ſo bleſſe all their labours in their ſeverall places and congregations, that they all may be inſtruments of thy hand to enlarge thy Sons Kingdome, and to win many unto thee. Comfort the comfortleſſe with all needfull comforts. Forget none of thine that are in trouble, but as

as their afflictions are, ſo let the joyes and comforts of thy ſpirit be unto them, and ſo ſanctifie unto all thine their afflictions and troubles, that they may tend to thy glory, and their own good. Give us thankfull hearts for all thy mercies both ſpirituall and corporall, for thou art very mercifull unto us in the things of this life, and infinitely more mercifull in the things of a better life. Let us deepely ponder and weigh all thy particular favours toward us, that by the due conſideration thereof our hearts may be gained yet neerer unto thee, and that therefore we may both love and obey thee, becauſe thou art ſo kind and loving unto us: that even thy love towards us may draw our love towards thee, and that becauſe mercy is with thee thou maiſt be feared. Grant theſe things, good Father, and all other needfull graces for our ſoules or bodies, or any of thine throughout the whole world, for Jeſus Chriſts ſake: in whoſe Name we further call upon thee as he hath taught us in his Goſpel, ſaying, *Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.*

A prayer to be used at any time, by one alone privately.

O Lord my God and heavenly Father, I thy most unworthy child doe here in thy sight freely confesse that I am a most sinfull creature, and damnable transgressor of all thy holy Lawes and Commandements: that as I was borne and bred in sinne, and stained in the wombe, so have I continually brought forth the corrupt and ugly fruits of that infection and contagion, wherein I was first conceived, both in thoughts, words, and workes: If I should goe about to reckon up my particular offences, I know not where to begin, or where to make an end. For they are more then the haires of my head; yea, farre more then I can possibly feele or know. For who knoweth the height and depth of his corruption? who knoweth how oft he offendeth? Thou only, O Lord, knowest my sinnes, who knowest my heart; nothing is hid from thee: thou knowest what I have beene, and what I am: yea, my conscience doth accuse mee of many and grievous evils, and I doe daily feele by wofull experience how fraile I am, how prone to evill, and how untoward unto all goodnesse.

My

My mind is full of vanity, my heart full of prophanenesse, mine affections full of deadnesse, dulnesse, and drowsinesse in matters of thy worship and service: Yea, my whole soule is full of spirituall blindnesse, hardnesse, unprofitablenesse, coldnesse, and security. And in very deed, I am altogether a lump of sin, and a masse of all misery, and therefore I have forfeited thy favour, incurred thy high displeasure, and have given thee just cause to frown upon me, to give me over, and leave me to mine owne corrupt will and affections. But (O my deare Father) I have learned from thy mouth, that thou art a God full of mercy, slow to wrath, of great compassion and kindnesse towards all such as groane under the burthen of their sinnes. Therefore extend thy great mercy towards me poore sinner, and give me a generall pardon for all mine offences whatsoever: seale it in the bloud of thy Son, and seale it to my conscience by thy Spirit, assuring me more and more of thy love and favour towards me, and that thou art a reconciled Father unto me. Grant that I may all time to come love thee much, because much is given, and of very love feare thee, and obey thee. O Lord increase my faith, that I may stedfastly beleeve all the promises

of

of the Gospel made in thy Sonne Christ, and rest upon them altogether. Enable mee to bring forth the sound fruits of faith and repentance in all my particular actions. Fill my soule full of joy and peace in beleeving. Fill mee full of inward comfort and spirituall strength against all temptations: give me yet a greater feeling of thy love and manifold mercies towards mee; worke in my soule a love of thy majestie, a zeale of thy glory, and hatred of evill, and a desire of all good things. Give mee victory over those sinnes which thou knowest are strongest in me. Let me once at last make a conquest of the world and the flesh. Mortifie in mee whatsoever is carnall: sanctifie mee throughout by thy spirit: knit my heart to thee for ever, that I may feare thy name: renue in mee the Image of thy Son Christ daily more and more. Give mee a delight in the reading and meditation of thy word. Let me rejoyce in the publike Ministery thereof. Let me love and reverence all the faithfull Ministers of thy Gospel. Sanctifie their doctrines to my conscience, seale them in my soule, worke them in my heart; give me a soft and melting heart, that I may tremble at thy words, and bee alwaies much affected with godly Ser-

Sermons. Let not my sinnes hold backe thy mercies from me, nor mine unworthinesse stop the passage of thy grace. Open mine eyes to see the great wonders of thy law. Reveale thy secrets unto me: be open-hearted toward mee thy unworthy servant. Hide nothing from mee that may make for thy glory, & the good of my soule. Bless all meanes unto mee which thou usest for my good. Bless all holy instructions unto my soule. Bless mee at all times, both in hearing and reading thy word. Give me the right use of all thy mercies and corrections, that I may be the better for them. Let me abound in love to thy children. Let my heart be very neerely knit unto them, that where thou lovest most, there I may love most also. Let mee watch and pray, that I enter not into temptation: give me patience and contentment in all things. Let me love thee more & more, and the world lesse and lesse. So draw my mind upward, that I may despise all transitory things. Let mee be so rapt and ravished with the sight and feeling of heavenly things, that I may make a base reckoning of all earthly things. Let me use this world as though I used it not. Let me use it but for necessity, as meat and drink. Let me not bee carried away

with

with the vaine pleasures and fond delights thereof. Good Father worke the good worke in me, and never leave mee nor forsake mee till thou hast brought me to true happinesse. Oh dear Father, make me faithfull in my calling, that I may serve thee in it, and be alwaies carefull to doe what good I may in any thing. Blesse me in my outward estate. Blesse my soule, body, goods, and name. Blesse all that belong unto me. Blesse my goings out and commings in. Let thy countenance be lifted up upon me now and alwaies, cheere me up with the joyes and comforts of thy spirit: make me thankfull for all thy mercies. For I must needs confesse that thou art very kind to me in all things. For in thee I live, move, and have my being; of thee I have my welfare and good being; thou art a daily friend and speciall good benefactor unto me. I live at thy cost and charges, I hold all of thee in chiefe, and I find that thou art never weary of doing me good: thy goodnes towards me is unchangeable. Oh, I can never be thankfull enough unto thee for all thy mercies both spirituall and corporall. But in such measure as I am able I praise thy name for all, beseeching thee to accept of my thanksgiving in thy Son Christ; and to give

me

me a profitable vse of all thy fauours, that thereby my heart may bee fully drawne vnto thee: giue me, O father, to bee of such a good nature and disposition, that I may be won by gentlenesse and faire meanes, as much as if thou gauest me many lashes. Pardon all mine vnthankfulnesse, vnkindnesse, and great abusing of thy mercies, and giue mee grace to vse them more to thy glory in all time to come. Strengthen mee, deare Father, thus to continue praising and glorifying thy name here vpon earth, that after this life I may be crowned of thee for euer in thy Kingdome. Graunt these petitions, most mercifull God, not onely to me, but to all thy deare children throughout the whole world, for Iesus Christs sake: in whose name I doe further call vpon thee, saying as he hath taught me,

Our father, which art in heaven, &c.

FINIS.

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